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'Zero tolerance for tourist visa abusers'

» Chamber of Commerce: Illegal practice threatens vital visa program

» Kilili: Protect integrity of tourist industry

By DENNIS B. CHAN
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REPORTER

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres wagged his finger yesterday at the alarming and illegal practice of "a few dishonest employers and developers" that have deceptively shepherded or hired individuals as "tourists" under the visa program to work in the islands' hotels, restaurants, or construction industries.

Torres

In a statement yesterday, Torres said this illegal practice would not be tolerated and must immediately stop.

See ZERO on Page 4

DOL: CNMI is short on construction workers

By FRAULEINE VILLANUEVA-DIZON
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REPORTER

Construction workers are in demand but in short supply in the CNMI.

In a recent data collection done by the CNMI Department of Labor, there are less than a thousand construction workers in the Commonwealth.

"Internally, we sourced that from our workforce listing that is submitted by the companies," CNMI Labor Secretary Edith DeLeon Guerrero said.

DOL said there are 839 construction workers on Saipan, 47 on Tinian, and 38 on Rota.

"That is an indication that we're going to need more construction workers," DeLeon Guerrero said.

She added that it is "obvious" that there is a shortage on island in terms of construction workers.

"That's obvious with the amount of projects that are going on. Imagine being a contractor, you have, like, 10 projects on your hands. So how do you split your workers?" DeLeon Guerrero said.

"That tells us that there is a great demand for construction workers in the market right now because of the numerous construction projects that are going on, for example, the Best Sunshine project, and all the other projects that are coming up," she added.

In the coming years, about 15,000 rooms are projected to be built in the CNMI.

Best Sunshine International, Ltd. alone said it would need about 2,000 workers for the construction and

See DOL on Page 4

CARE still needs $13M for post-Soudelor repairs

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

The Commonwealth Advocates for Recovery Efforts still needs close to $14 million to help fund the cost of houses that either need to be repaired or rebuilt, according to the group's director Jenny Hegland.

Hegland, during CARE's monthly meeting yesterday at the Governor's Office conference room, said that an estimated total cost of $13,899,003.94 would be needed to answer the unmet housing needs.

"Thirty percent of the homes need to be totally rebuilt, we will start from scratch like laying the foundation

See CARE on Page 4

CLEANING VISITORS

Two students from South Korea carry a bag for the trash that they collected and picked up during their San Antonio cleanup last Saturday. Over 20 Korean students are on island this month for the Costa World Tour English Camp.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

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INSIDE

NATION

Civil rights leaders finally gathered at the South Carolina Statehouse to pay homage to the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. without the Confederate flag casting a long shadow over them.

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WORLD

Syrian peace talks are looking increasingly moot as a string of recent battlefield victories by government troops have bolstered President Bashar Assad's hand.

» PAGE 16

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Local

Jury trial of Ogumoro starts

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

» Ex-DPS deputy chief files motion to dismiss charges 1 business day before trial starts

The jury trial of former Department of Public Safety deputy commissioner Ambrosio T. Ogumoro commenced yesterday in Superior Court for his alleged role in shielding then-attorney general Edward Buckingham from being served with penal summons in 2012.

Associate Judge David A. Wiseman completed yesterday morning the selection of eight jurors, including two alternates.

Wiseman ordered the eight jurors to come back in court today, Wednesday.

Wiseman ordered the lawyers of the parties to appear in court today, Wednesday, at 8:30am, for a hearing on Ogumoro's motion to dismiss some charges.

Ogumoro filed the motion on Friday, or one business day before the trial.

There are only 11 remaining charges against Ogumoro after Wiseman on Thursday dismissed four charges upon the request of special prosecutor George Hasselback.

The remaining charges are one count of conspiracy to commit theft of services, six counts of misconduct in public office, one count of theft of services, one count of conspiracy to commit obstruction justice: Interference with a law enforcement officer or witness, obstructing justice: interference with a law enforcement officer or witness, and criminal coercion.

Last Jan. 4, Hasselback moved to dismiss without prejudice the charges of conspiracy to commit obstruction of justice: Interference with service of process, two counts of misconduct in public office, and one count of obstructing justice: Interference with service of process. Wiseman granted the motion.

Ogumoro, through counsel Edward C. Arriola, filed on Friday a motion joining the dismissal of the four charges but with prejudice or cannot be refiled anymore.

Ogumoro

Ogumoro also filed a motion for further dismissal of five other charges because they also all relate to obstructing justice by interfering with service of invalid process.

Arriola noted that in Buckingham's case, Associate Judge Kenneth L. Govendo held that the pe-

See JURY on Page 4

2 probations officers for courts; $60K for Rota gaming regulators okayed

By DENNIS B. CHAN
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REPORTER

New laws have been signed by Gov. Ralph DLG Torres to retain two probation officers at the Office of Adult Probation and appropriate some $60,000 for the Rota Gaming Commission.

Public Law 19-29 amends last year's budget bill to allow, among others, that two probation officers funded by federal funds for fiscal year 2015 to be converted for probation officers for the CNMI Judiciary or that the two new positions may be otherwise filled as new probation officers under government appropriations for the courts.

Another amendment to the budget act states that funds earmarked to the Group Health Life Insurance program and funds appropriated to the program for the executive branch shall not be reprogrammed for any other purpose. Any lapsed funds will be used to reduce the premium of the government group health insurance, and funds appropriated to the Group Health Insurance business unit may be used to pay unpaid claims incurred in prior years, the bill states.

Rota local law 19-35 appropriates $63,606.95 from funds specifically allotted to Rota under a past electronic gaming bill to the Rota Gaming Commission. The funds will be used for gaming and tourism enhancement activities, the bill states.

KSPN available on TV and Internet

With Docomo cable TV still down throughout much of the island due to Typhoon Soudelor, KSPN2 continues to broadcast on the radio and Internet. Tune in to Magic 100.3 at 6pm Monday to Friday. You can watch us online at www.kspn2.com. For a higher quality, more mobile-friendly option after 8pm, check out www.saipantv.com. ***(PR)***

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Wiseman increases to $25K bail for stabbing suspect

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Superior Court Associate Judge David A. Wiseman yesterday increased to $25,000 cash bail from the original $10,000 cash imposed on Cheryl Lynn Muna Worswick, the suspect in the stabbing of a cashier at a store across the Pacific Islands Club in San Antonio.

At a bail hearing, Wiseman increased the bail after finding that the 38-year-old Worswick has a prior criminal history having been convicted in 2002 for criminal mischief and disturbing the peace.

Wiseman also noted that the defendant has an outstanding bench warrant in a traffic case issued in June 2014.

Citing the seriousness of the allegations in this case and the prior criminal history, the judge said he finds that Worswick poses danger to the community.

Assistant attorney general Barbara Cepeda, counsel for the government, recommended to keep the $10,000 cash bail that the court had earlier imposed in issuing the arrest warrant.

Worswick

Cepeda noted that a weapon was involved in this case and that they have witnesses and footage of a surveillance camera.

Assistant public defender Matthew Meyer was appointed as counsel for Worswick.

Preliminary hearing will be on Jan. 26 at 1:30pm.

The cashier, a 52-year-old Filipina, received 15 stitches to the right hand at the Commonwealth Health Center's emergency room and was later released.

Police arrested Worswick on Monday in Koblerville on charges of assault with a dangerous weapon, assault and battery, and disturbing the peace.

Police detective Catherine B. Pangelinan stated in her report that on Sunday at 11:57am, a police officer responded to a reported robbery incident at Islander Mini Mart/Western Union located along Beach Road, San Antonio east of PIC.

The officer met the victim, who was in the Hibiscus Hair Salon located beside Islander Mini Mart. The officer failed to interview the victim at that time because she was in shock and was being treated by medics.

The officer observed the victim was shaking, her hair was messy, and has several bruises on the face and has three cuts on the right hand.

The officer later managed to interview the cashier at the Commonwealth Health Center.

Pangelinan said she and two other detectives also responded to the scene and met with two persons, who showed her the surveillance footage.

On the footage during the attack, Pangelinan said she identified the suspect as Worswick, who used to live at San Antonio beach side.

Pangelinan proceeded to the residence of Worswick's mother in Koblerville. The mother identified the person on the surveillance footage as her daughter, who doesn't live with her anymore.

Pangelinan said during her interview, the cashier described the suspect as a woman who is her regular customer at the store.

The victim described the suspect as wearing dark green raincoat and covered her head with the raincoat's hood.

According to the victim, while she was behind the cashier counter doing transaction with a Western Union customer, the suspect came in and asked her what time it was.

As she was busy counting money and the suspect was just staring at the money, the cashier told her that the clock was behind her.

About five minutes later after the Western Union customer left, the suspect came inside the store and locked the front door.

The suspect turned around and showed the cashier a silver kitchen knife measuring about a foot.

The cashier immediately picked up the phone and dialed 911 for police assistance. While the phone was still ringing, the suspect, armed with the knife, immediately walked behind the cashier counter.

The cashier told the suspect to go ahead and take the money if she wants it.

When the suspect pointed the knife toward the cashier's stomach, the victim struggled by holding the weapon.

During the struggle, the cashier suffered several cuts on the right hand.

The cashier fell to the floor and she felt several blows to her face and body.

The cashier managed to get up and ran toward the counter to escape, but the suspect pulled her back.

The two struggled again as the victim held the knife to avoid getting stabbed.

When the cashier managed to grab the knife, the suspect ran outside the store. The cashier sought help from the employees at Hibiscus Hair Salon.

Police said a crime scene investigator processed the scene, procured the knife, white cloth, and the raincoat belonging to Worswick.

PSS looking for construction manager

By FRAULEINE VILLANUEVA-DIZON
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REPORTER

The Public School System is looking for a manager that will oversee construction projects for repairs and renovations.

According to Education Commissioner Dr. Rita Sablan, they have a request for qualification for the said position.

"It's a proposed qualification that we need for our different projects like the renovation and repairs of the buildings, for the energy project we need for the construction, different types of projects," Sablan said.

"We are soliciting for qualification proposals from the community to be construction managers," she added.

Sablan said there are still a lot of projects that they need to do with regards to repair and reconstruction due to the damage brought about by Typhoon Soudelor.

"We have five big projects under [Federal Emergency Management Agency] public assistance," Sablan said.

She added that they also have three big projects under grants and loans in addition to their normal repairs and maintenance.

Several schools were impacted in different ways when the typhoon hit last August.

Garapan Elementary School sustained electrical damage in their roofs when the tin was blown away by strong winds.

Marianas High School was also among the heavily damaged and rained out by the storm.

One classroom was damaged at the Dandan Middle School. Several other facilities were partially damaged.

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SAIPAN KENSINGTON HOTEL

Samoa opposition MP calls for anti-corruption tribunal

APIA, Samoa (Samoa Observer)—No one is above the law.

So reminds the Tautua Samoa Party's Shadow Minister of Finance, Afualo Dr. Wood Salele, who has revived the call for the government to set up an Anti-Corruption Tribunal.

Speaking to the Samoa Observer, Afualo said instances of alleged corruption identified by the Controller and Auditor General and backed up by the Officers of Parliament Committee give more than sufficient reasons for the establishment of a national body to tackle corruption.

"No one, and I repeat no one, is above the law including the Prime Minister and all of us," Afualo said. "If we break the law we will make sure that justice will be served."

"But that cannot be fulfilled unless we have the Anti Corruption Tribunal."

"I know Tuilaepa has been saying that we have the Ombudsman and of course we know that but we have seen a lot of cases now where people are not satisfied with the mandate of the office so we really need to make sure that what they do will be fulfilled."

"But what we are really after, is to make sure that there is justice and that would be the responsibility of this Tribunal and then they will refer everything to the National Prosecution Office."

Afualo said the country has been suffering as a result of the government inability to address issues of corruption and abuse of power over the years.

"We all know that there is so much corruption," he said.

"One of the solutions that we will definitely establish is we will set up an "Anti Corruption Tribunal to deal with this."

Afualo praised the decision to set up a National Prosecution Office (N.P.O). But he said such a body is useful without an Anti Corruption Tribunal.

"That body (N.P.O.) cannot act if they are not given any prosecutions at all," he said.

"Therefore we will make sure that these national bodies will work together. The Police will also be doing their part but we have to get this information from the grassroots and then pass it on to the National Prosecution Office to do their job."

Afualo said it's important that members of the public get the message that the law is to be respected.

"Sometimes people will think when we set up a law that it can be used as tools to manipulate people and of course because sometimes the government does that, but for us (Tautua Party) we don't see it that way," he said.

"We will make sure that there is justice for everyone.

ZERO

From Page 1

"I am in the process of taking the necessary steps alongside our federal partners" to make sure "proper enforcement is carried-out here in the CNMI and to strengthen penalties where possible for those who violate federal immigration law," Torres said.

Torres' reprimand comes after the administration heard reports on the tourist visa waiver abuse, *Saipan Tribune* learned. The administration believes in the need to work with the federal government on "information-sharing and enforcement," a senior official close to the issue said. As they understand it, the local government cannot exactly run in or raid a business or a developer's grounds to uncover or halt alleged visa waiver abuse, as this responsibility falls in the hands of the federal government, which took back control of immigration in 2009.

Saipan Chamber of Commerce president Alex Sablan said yesterday that—while he could not speak for all businesses—he assumed some people "want to skirt the program because they are not able to get" a contract worker visa processed for an individual worker, or want to jump ahead of the process, or "jump outside the box."

"What they are doing is illegal, we know that," Sablan told *Saipan Tribune* in a phone interview. "There should be no foreign nationals coming in under the parole program process working in the Commonwealth. To have that happen, again, compromises our overall program and really compromises the economy of the CNMI. I think everybody should be concerned about this."

In his statement, Torres said he would be working with U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services to ensure proper enforcement.

Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP) told *Saipan Tribune* that he shared Torres' concerns and would "work with him to protect the integrity of our tourism industry."

Federal immigration law allows thousands of tourists from participating countries under visa waiver programs to travel to the CNMI every year without a visa once various requirements are met. These tourists—Chinese or Russian for example—are the lifeblood of the CNMI economy, which almost exclusively is based on tourism.

Torres believes that using these people from these countries as workers under a tourist visa "could result in the federal government revoking or cancelling the waiver programs." "Shortcutting the process in favor of short-term expediency will only harm us all in the long run," he said.

Alex Sablan echoes Torres' concerns. "My statement to all businesses that are attempting to do this is: Stop it. You stand to kill tourism in the Commonwealth, a valued sector of our Commonwealth—the Chinese market and the Russian market, and we can't afford this. I applaud the governor for coming out strongly in a statement against the activity. This needs to end."

JON PEREZ

Commonwealth Advocates for Recovery Efforts director Jenny Hegland, center, reports to members of their group that included president Alex Sablan, right, and press secretary Ivan Blanco during their meeting yesterday at the Governor's Office conference room on Capital Hill.

CARE

From Page 1

and everything which is more costly. The remaining 70 percent need some repairs," said Hegland after the meeting.

"We estimated that amount on the unmet needs for housing repairs and rebuilding of 591 island-wide cases. We took into consideration the construction estimates, and the cost of materials and labor," she added.

Hegland said that originally $15,418.817 was needed for all the 591 families but they subtracted the amount of $1,519,813.90 after 42 percent of those affected received assistance from the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

"There are 58 percent of families that were ineligible to receive FEMA assistance and some of them are renters that also need help for repairs since their landlords are not taking care of the repairs," added Hegland.

The American Red Cross-NMI Chapter helped in putting up the report under their immediate disaster case management program with their case managers going around the island to identify the most immediate cases.

Hegland, in the report she submitted to the group, also said that 90.7 percent of the families with documented unmet needs through the IDCM have individuals in their households with functional needs, medical needs, and have a family member over 65 or under three, or live below the poverty line.

An approximate of 34.2 percent of residents with unmet needs was of Northern Marianas Descent, while 16.8 percent of the families have at least one household member with disability.

CARE has already reviewed 21 cases since their initial meeting and currently assisting 14 families or 43 individuals with additional cases pending. They have also allotted $64,853 in resources to support repairs and rebuilding.

"As much as possible we want to inform the community. We want to be transparent. We all know that this is a long process of recovery that's why we all need everyone's help," Hegland said.

Representatives from Skywalker Communications Group were also present during the meeting to get some information on how to help with the repair and recovery efforts. Skywalker is trying to introduce the GreensStay housing project that they said is specifically designed for Pacific Island nations like the CNMI.

DOL

From Page 1

completion of the upcoming Grand Mariana Casino & Hotel Resort in Garapan.

Aside from new constructions, many homes and establishments are still in need of rebuilding after the destruction of Typhoon Soudelor.

According to DeLeon Guerrero they will use the data to build evidence for the Covenant Sectiion 902 talks.

"We will use that number to build the evidence also for the 902 conversations because obviously the employers are petitioning for more employees. We need to provide the data," DeLeon Guerrero said.

High rates for workers

Because of the high demand for workers in the construction industry, many are jacking up their per hour rates rates to supply workers.

"I get a lot of calls from other contractors expressing concern why are these construction workers charging so much beyond the minimum wage and so forth and I said, well it's a matter of supply and demand," DeLeon Guerrero said.

She added that the government can't do anything about the high rates of construction workers on island. The DOL will come in play only when the rates for workers go below the state minimum wage.

"There's no restriction there as a business to up the charges. You're in need of service, so therefore they can call the shots in terms of how much the contract will cost you," DeLeon Guerrero said.

JURY

From Page 2

nal summons to be served and eventually served upon Buckingham was invalid because it was not signed by a judge, but rather by a clerk who was not an "official authorized to issue process."

Therefore, Arriola said, Govendo dismissed all charges with respect to "obstructing justice by interfering with service of process" and "misconduct in office relating to the same."

Arriola said as correctly argued by Buckingham, "it is impossible for Buckingham to have obstructed service of process because the penal summons was invalid."

Therefore, Arriola said Ogumoro moves to dismiss the five charges in that such counts are charges essentially related to obstructing justice by interfering with service of process and the accompanying conspiracy, and misconduct in public office.

In the government's opposition to the motion, Hasselback said the motion has been filed approximately 37 days late without any explanation for this tardiness.

"This court should not only refuse to entertain this motion, but it should seriously consider sanctions against both defendant and his attorney," Hasselback said.

Ogumoro is the only remaining defendant in this case.

Last Jan. 13, former Commonwealth Ports Authority police chief Jordan Kosam entered a guilty plea while the charges against his co-defendant, former CPA police captain John T. Rebuenog, were dismissed.

Kosam signed a plea deal with the government and pleaded guilty to one count of misconduct in public office.

Superior Court Presiding Judge Robert C. Naraja sentenced the 43-year-old Kosam to one-year imprisonment, but suspended the imposition of the sentence.

Naraja placed Kosam on three years of supervised release.

Wiseman dismissed the charges against Rebuenog after special prosecutor Hasselback moved to drop the charges.

The charges against three other co-defendants were already resolved. Former governor Benigno R. Fitial pleaded guilty, while Buckingham was convicted during a bench trial. The charges against Fitial's former personal driver and bodyguard Jermaine Joseph W. Nekaifes were dismissed.

Senate tackles nominations to CDA, CPA boards

By DENNIS B. CHAN
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REPORTER

The Senate Committee on Executive Appointments & Government Investigations examined yesterday the qualifications of a couple of Gov. Ralph DLG Torres' nominees to the Commonwealth Ports Authority and Commonwealth Development Authority boards.

Clarence Pangelinan Tenorio Jr. was nominated to the CPA Board representing Saipan, while David Demapan was nominated to the CDA Board.

Tenorio currently serves as the manager for Joeten Wholesale and head buyer under the business conglomerate of J.C. Tenorio Enterprises. He is responsible for supply purchases from various countries including the United States for the various subsidiaries of the enterprise. He also graduated from UC-Berkeley with a BA in Political Science. He served in the U.S. Armed Forces as an Adjutant/S-1 (Personnel) in active and reserve duty, and has been Army Commendation Medal, Army Achievement Medal, National Defense Service Medal (2nd Award), Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Armed Forces Reserve Medal w/M Device (2nd Award), Army Service Ribbon, and Parachutist Badge, according to the Office of the Governor.

Tenorio

Demapan

At the Senate chamber yesterday, Tenorio told reporters that he looks forward to bringing his experience in the private sector and his military service to benefit the Commonwealth and to help improve the airports and seaports of the CNMI.

Tenorio said he has served a total of seven years in active duty, leaving the U.S. Army with the rank of captain.

Asked what issues he'd been following at the airport that he'd like to work on, Tenorio noted the divert airfield that the U.S. Air Force proposes to build on Saipan as a "big issue," and noted some of the infrastructure problems that have plagued the airport recently, like the problems runway lights and the fire trucks going down.

"Those are things that we just have to have good back up plans to address things like that in future," Tenorio said.

"Governor Torres and Lt. Governor Hocog are extremely pleased that Mr. Tenorio accepted his nomination to the CPA board and are confident he will be an asset to the board and to the CNMI as whole," Office of Governor spokesperson Ivan Blanco said yesterday.

Sen. Arnold Palacios (R-Saipan) also said Tenorio was clearly a qualified individual just from his resume and his experience dealing with ports as part of a major corporation on Saipan.

"I am very confident that I believe that the other members saw that also," he said. "He's a young individual that has been in a major private enterprise and that has got the experience. He's part of the next generation of commercial leaders."

Blanco also said that Torres and Hocog are confident of Demapan's strong background, lauding his experience in finance and accounting as "a significant plus to the CDA Board."

Demapan began his career as a staff auditor for Deloitte before becoming a comptroller for Marianas Public Land Corp., Commonwealth Ports Authority, and then CFO for the Marianas Public Land Authority, comptroller/auditor for the NMI Retirement Fund, before entering the private sector. He currently serves as a legislative fiscal analyst with the CNMI Legislative Bureau after leaving the private sector.

Demapan holds a Master's Degree in Professional Accountancy (MSA) from Walsh College of Accountancy and Business Administration, Michigan.

Garapan to have limited water supply until pumps are replaced

By FRAULEINE VILLANUEVA-DIZON
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REPORTER

Parts of Garapan that are being serviced by the water tank in Puerto Rico will continue to have limited water supply in the coming days.

Commonwealth Utilities Corp. water and wastewater department chief engineer John Riegel said they will continue to limit hours of service in the area.

"We're going to have to start limiting some more hours in Garapan for a while," Riegel said.

The Puerto Rico tank has been experiencing low water supply particularly last Saturday.

"The problem was that because we had less supply going in to the tank, we didn't adjust our discharge from the tank and therefore we ran out of water in the tank," Riegel said.

Riegel said some pumps supplying the Puerto Rico tank are still not working and that they need to be replaced.

"We got a few wells down so that hasn't helped things in that area," Riegel said.

He said five of the wells that serve the Puerto Rico reservoir currently have problems. The wells that serve the said tank are located in Obyan and Isley Field

Riegel said the engineers will figure out how many hours they can supply water with the amount that is coming in. They will then set a water supply schedule for the service area affected.

Just last November CUC was able to supply 24-hour water service to the whole Garapan area. However, it will now be back to limited service until the downed pumps get replaced.

He added that replacements these will be coming soon.

"They're supposed to be coming at the end of the month," Riegel said.

Associate engineer Larry Manacop said it will take several days for them to install the pumps.

"Once we receive that, it will take maybe a week to replace all the downed wells," Manacop said.

Flo Rida concerts in Guam, Saipan postponed

By FRAULEINE VILLANUEVA-DIZON
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REPORTER

The concert of rapper Flo Rida that was scheduled this coming Saturday has been postponed, according to organizer Steven Brownstein Entertainment.

Similarly, the scheduled performance in Guam on Friday was put on hold.

In an announcement released yesterday, Steven Brownstein Entertainment said the concerts will be postponed until further notice.

"Steven Brownstein Entertainment regrets to inform our awesome fans and the general public that this weekend's Flo Rida concerts scheduled for Friday Jan 22nd on Guam, and Saturday Jan 23rd on Saipan have been postponed until further notice," the events promoter said.

It added that the reason for the postponement was "due to unresolved scheduling issues."

"We were offered the opportunity to bring other artists to perform in Flo Rida's place however due to such short notice, we felt it would be best to postpone the concert at this time," Steven Brownstein Entertainment said.

Several options have been made for those who already purchased their tickets.

Ticket buyers can visit the exact location where their Flo Rida concert ticket was purchased for them to avail of a refund.

They may also hold on to their tickets until the next scheduled concert is announced or they can exchange it for the UB40 concert ticket.

Those who got their tickets through the contest as well as those who are holding complimentary tickets will also have the option to hold on to their Flo Rida tickets until the next scheduled concert or exchange them for UB40 tickets.

UB40, which was supposed to have a concert in the Marianas at the latter part of last year, will perform next month.

Steven Brownstein Entertainment said information and tickets to the UB40 concert on Guam and Saipan will follow. Tickets will be available Feb. 1.

"Steven Brownstein Entertainment is committed to bringing world class entertainment to Guam and Saipan. We've personally invested in sharing the greatest concert experiences with the people of the Marianas and we thank you all for your continued support," the events promoter said.

Coast Guard searching for 3 missing divers near Penguin Bank

HONOLULU—The Coast Guard is searching for three missing divers near Penguin Bank, Molokai, Monday.

The missing divers are a 40-year-old man, 30-year-old man and a 17-year-old boy. They were last seen at 10am, wearing full body camouflage wetsuits and are reportedly excellent swimmers.

Coast Guard Sector Honolulu launched a 45-foot Response Boat-Medium crew from Coast Guard Station Honolulu, an MH-65 Dolphin helicopter crew and an HC-130 Hercules airplane crew from Coast Guard Air Station Barbers Point. The crew of the Coast Guard Cutter Ahi was diverted to assist with the search.

An Urgent Marine Information Broadcast has been issued alerting mariners in the area to keep a sharp lookout and report any sightings to the Sector Honolulu command center.

Watchstanders at the Sector Honolulu command center received a call at 11:20 a.m., from the operator of a 20-foot cuddy cabin vessel stating he was diving with three friends in the vicinity of Penguin Bank when their vessel began to drift away.

The three missing divers waited on the surface while the operator attempted to recover the vessel. After recovering the vessel and returning to their previous location, he could not locate his companions.

Anyone with information that may help locate the divers are asked to contact the Sector Honolulu Command Center at 808-842-2600. ***(USCG)***

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Following Information/Documents Required
Property Map/As Built Map/ Total Land Area
If available for existing building showing
exact location & building details
Owner Title Information
Owner Asking Price

Ex-CBP officer found using 'ice' on Christmas Day, other times

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Bob Hajime Deleon Guerrero Yamagishi, a former U.S. Customs and Border Protection officer who was slapped last November in federal court with a sentence of 44-day time served and three years of probation for two counts of wire fraud, was found using methamphetamine or "ice" last Christmas Day and other times.

U.S. Probation Officer Assistant Juanette David-Atalig has requested the U.S. District Court for the NMI to revoke the supervision of the 42-year-old Yamagishi for allegedly violating the conditions of his supervision.

According to David-Atalig, Yamagishi admitted to using methamphetamine on Dec. 11, 21, and 25, 2015, and on Jan. 10, 2016.

David-Atalig said the offender also failed to appear for random drug testing on Dec. 11 and 12, 2015, and Jan. 8 and 9, 2016.

The probation assistant said Yamagishi failed to appear for his counseling sessions on Dec. 12 and 14, 2015, and Jan. 12, 13, and 14, 2016.

On supervision compliance, David-Atalig said Yamagishi paid off his restitution in the amount of $6,794.57 as well as $200 in special assessment fee on Dec. 2, 2015.

At the Nov. 10, 2015, sentencing, U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona reminded Yamagishi that she could revoke his supervised release again as what she did last Oct. 7 when he violated his pre-trial release by using "ice."

At the sentencing hearing, Yamagishi said "ice" is very devastating to him that he almost lost everything. He said the only one he did not lose was his family's support to him.

Yamagishi has seven young children.

Yamagishi pleaded guilty to two counts of fraud by wire after making illegal cash advance transactions on a travel charge card between July 4 and Aug. 7, 2014.

According to the factual basis of the plea agreement, between Yamagishi knowingly devised a scheme or plan for obtaining money by means of false or fraudulent representations. Yamagishi used wire communications to carry out or attempt to carry out an essential part of the scheme.

As then-CBP officer, Yamagishi applied for and received a travel charge card from J.P. Morgan Chase. J.P. Morgan Chase prohibits the use of the travel charge for non-travel purposes.

As then, CBP officer, he made illegal cash advance transactions 28 times in July 2014 and nine times in August 2014, for a total amount of $6,227.53, according to the indictment.

Students from S. Korea clean up San Antonio

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
South Korean students receive certificates of appreciation after participating in a cleanup in parts of San Antonio last Saturday.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Students from South Korea participating in the month-long Costa World Tour English Camp pick up trash by the roadside of Hopwood Jr. High School.

By FRAULEINE VILLANUEVA-DIZON
frauleine_villanueva@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Visiting students from South Korea participated in a cleanup effort last weekend.

Twenty-three students who are part of the month-long Costa World Tour English Camp cleaned parts of San Antonio Village.

According to Yuki Kishimoto, student cultural exchange program coordinator of the Saipan Mayor's Office, the students cleaned the roadside area from Hopwood Jr. High School to Pakpak Beach.

The 2015 Liberation Queen Zolenska Yaroitemal also joined the students during the cleanup.

The 23 students are third to ninth graders and came from various schools in South Korea.

They will be on island until Jan. 28.

As part of the program, the students are attending classes at Eucon International School.

Aside from learning English and participating in the beautification of the islands, the students are also visiting various government agencies as well as recreation spots such as the Managaha Island.

"We are very fortunate to have the students donate their time on occasions like this and seeing the students from off-island help beautify the island was very moving. We would like to express our heartfelt appreciation for their hard work and hope they continue to visit our island with their friends and family," Kishimoto said.

Last year, 18 students participated in the same program, according to Costa World Tour president Yeon Tae Choi.

Rotary asks help from construction sector to repair bus stops

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Rotary Club of Saipan vice president Brian Clayton said Tuesday that they would ask the help of their members in the construction business to complete the repair, improvement, and construction of bus stops in several areas on island.

Rotarians, during their weekly meeting held yesterday at the Hyatt Regency Saipan's Giovanni's restaurant, identified the bus stops in Kagman, Koblerville, and one in Middle Road near Conwood in Chalan Laulau.

Clayton, who presided the meeting, said that the bus stops in Kagman are only made of wood and have tin roofs. Typhoon Soudelor destroyed most of the bus stops in Kagman.

"These bus stops are not made of concrete. We're hoping our Rotarians in the construction business could help us in constructing concrete bus stops for the kids," he said.

Clayton added that aside from the construction of concrete bus stops Rotary would also do the painting like the ones in Koblerville and in Middle Road near Conwood.

He also asked Rotary members to help identify other bus stops that need to be improved, which is part of their continuing service to the community.

One of the bus stops in Kagman will also be a part of the Kagman Family Park project that the Rotary is hoping to finish by the end of the year.

Rotary Saipan has applied for a Community Development Block Grant from the Northern Marianas Housing Corp., which would release an invitation to bid for the Kagman Family Park project. Building designs and scope of work have already been submitted to NMHC.

Clayton said that once the request for bid is out it would take close to two months to review all the bids. Another six to eight months would be needed for the construction of the Kagman Family Park.

Turning the basketball court to a full-size court with new bleachers and community playground are some of the plans for the Kagman Family Park.

Clayton said that once the basketball court is finished, they would invite league organizers that hold games at San Antonio and TSL Sports Complex to also try and have their matches at the new facility.

For more information on the Rotary Club of Saipan, email saipanrotary@gmail.com.

Robert Tenorio Torres
Attorney at Law
Plata Drive, Whispering Palms (Chalan Kiya)
P.O. Box 503758
Saipan, MP 96950
Tel: (670) 234-7859
Fax: (670) 234-5749

Attorney for Plaintiff

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT FOR THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

BANK OF GUAM, Plaintiff, vs. KIM EUGENE FORRESTER Defendant.] CIVIL ACTION] NO. 14-0223] NOTICE OF AUCTION and] JUDICIAL SALE OF] DEFENDANT'S REMAINING] LEASEHOLD INTEREST ON] THE MORTGAGED] PROPERTY

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, that under and by virtue of a judgment made and entered in the above titled action on the 2nd day of April, 2015, by the Superior Court of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, to satisfy the amount found and adjudged due Plaintiff in the above titled action from Defendant, as prescribed in the Order Granting Motion for Order of Judicial Sale of Leasehold Interest of Mortgaged Property, the undersigned counsel or his designee will sell at public auction, to the highest bidder, on the **3rd day of February, 2016 at 10 a.m.,** at the Law Office of Robert T. Torres, Plata Drive, Chalan Kiya, Saipan, the premises and real estate, lying and being on Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, described in said judgment, to wit:

Lot 541 NEW-3-1. (a consolidation of Lot 541 New-2 and part of Lot 541 New-R2, formerly part of Lot 541 NEW-REM, part of Lot 541 NEW, which was part of Original Lot 541, TD 162) as more particularly described on Drawing/Cadastral Plat No. 2203/91 the original of which was recorded 29 AUG 1991 as Documented No. 91-3913 at Commonwealth Recorder's, Saipan.

Terms and Conditions of Sale.

1. Rights and duties of Auctioneer. Consistent with the custom and usage and applicable laws of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands governing auction sales with reserve, the auctioneer or his designee shall have the following rights and duties in conducting the auction sale:
   a) withdraw the property listed for sale in the public announcement before sale or before a bid for such property is accepted.
   b) to adjourn the sale without notice at any time before any specific property is sold, without incurring any liability whatsoever thereby; and
   c) to reject any and all bids.
2. Bids. Tentative bids may be submitted in advance for any and all of the property listed in the notice. Such bids shall not be binding, except that the highest of such bids will automatically be considered the opening bid for the property. Bids may be entered in person, in writing, or by telephone to Robert T. Torres, Attorney at Law, Plata Drive, Chalan Kiya, P.O. Box 503758, Saipan, MP 96950, Phone: 670-234-7859; Fax: 670-234-5749; Email: rttlaw@pticom.com.
3. Deposit and Payment. A deposit of ten percent (10%) of the purchase price must be paid on the day of the auction sale. The remaining balance will be due within ten days of the auction sale. All payments must be made by cash, cashier's check, or money order. Failure to make payment of the remaining balance within ten days will result in forfeiture by the buyer of the 10% deposit, and any and all of the buyer's rights, title and interest in any of the property will revert to Bank of Guam.
4. Change of Terms. Auctioneer and Bank of Guam reserve the right to change any of the terms of conduct and enforcement of sale by announcement, written or oral, made before the auction sale or at the commencement thereof, and such change or changes, by virtue of this clause shall be binding on any buyer by constructive notice.
5. Inspection and No Warranty. Bidders are cautioned to inspect the title and property. Contact the Law Office of Robert T. Torres for scheduled viewing and inspection times. The interests of the property are being sold "AS IS" and without warranty. Failure to inspect the real property will not constitute a ground for any claim, adjustment or rescission by any buyer.

DATED this 23rd day of December, 2015

/s/
Robert T. Torres, Auctioneer

MICHAEL A. WHITE, ESQ. F0122
THE LAW OFFICES OF MICHAEL A. WHITE, LLC.
POST OFFICE BOX 5222
SAIPAN, MARIANA ISLANDS 96950
TEL.: (670) 234-6547
FAX: (670) 234-9537

ATTORNEYS FOR Plaintiff

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

THE FINANCIAL & INSURANCE SERVICES GROUP, INC., Plaintiff, -v- LUCIA BORJA PALACIOS, Defendant. : **CIVIL ACTION NO. 11-0131**

FIFTH AMENDED NOTICE OF SALE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that, pursuant to an Order issued by the Court in this matter on April 10, 2012, I will sell, at public auction, to the highest bidder, on the terms and conditions set forth hereinbelow, all of the right, title, and interest of Defendant in and to the following property: Lot NO. 218-2-5, situated in As Teo, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands, more particularly bounded and described as follows:

Beginning at a corner which is designated as Corner No. 1, having plane rectangular coordinates of 53,203.65 meters north and 66,755.91 meters east of the Mariana Islands district coordinate system of 1956.
Thence N 13° 35' 00" E, 13.18 meters to Corner 3;
Thence S 80° 13' 00" E, 65.95 meters to Corner 4;
Thence S 09° 47' 00" E, 28.85 meters to Corner 5;
Thence N 80° 13' 00" W, 66.53 meters to Corner 1;
the point of beginning

Date, Time, and Place of Sale. The sale will be held on Friday, January 29, 2016, at the hour of 1:30 p.m., at the Law Offices of Michael A. White, LLC, Joeten Center, Susupe, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands. The sale will be open to the general public.

Terms and Conditions of Sale. The Terms and Conditions of Sale may be obtained from the undersigned, either prior to or at the sale. These terms and conditions shall govern the conduct of the sale.

DATED, this 23rd day of December, 2015:

/s/ MICHAEL A. WHITE, Auctioneer

NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION
P.O. BOX 500514, Saipan, MP 96950-0514
Email: nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp
Website: http://www.nmhcgov.net

NOTICE TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC

Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program

(December 31, 2015)

Pursuant to the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) recently published FY 2016 Fair Market Rent (FMR), which took effect on December 11, 2015, the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) wants to respectfully inform the general public that there has been a decrease in the FY 2016 FMR. As a result of this decrease, NMHC's FY 2016 Payment Standards shall be effective for all FY 2016 New Admission and Other Change-of-Unit (Unit Transfer) certifications that occur after December 11, 2015. Based on 24 CFR 982.505, for participants undergoing an annual recertification, the FY 2016 Payment Standards shall take effect for the family beginning at the effective date of the family's second regular reexamination following the effective date of the decrease in the payment standard amount.

Thank you and please direct all questions regarding this public notice to the following individuals:

1. Saipan Office – Telephone Numbers: 234-6866 or 234-9447
   • David Chargualaf, PHD Manager
   email: phdmanager@nmhcgov.net
2. Tinian Field Office – Telephone Number: 433-9213
   • Frances Diaz, Tinian Field Office Representative
   email: tiniannmhc@nmhcgov.net
3. Rota Field Office – Telephone Number: 532-9410
   • Arvin Ogo, Rota Field Office Representative
   email: ropnmhc@nmhcgov.net

Another lawsuit over CW-1 permit denial pending in federal court

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Another lawsuit filed by a private company and a Bangladeshi national against Homeland Security Secretary Jeh Johnson and other federal officials over the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services' denial in 2012 of a petition for Commonwealth-only worker, or CW-1 permit, has been pending in federal court.

Angando Inc. and Moniruzzaman Masud are suing the U.S. government, Homeland Security Secretary Johnson, USCIS Director Leon Rodriguez, and USCIS California Service Center Director Rosemary Langley Melville.

» Company's CW-1 petition to employ Bangladeshi filed in 2011 remains unresolved

The plaintiffs, through counsel Joseph Horey, filed the lawsuit in July 2015. They asked the court to declare that Masud was lawfully present in the CNMI at the time of Angando's petition, and is eligible for CW-1 classification.

Horey wants the court to compel the defendants to classify Masud as an alien eligible for CW-1 classification and to approve Angando's petition to employ him.

Assistant U.S. Attorneys Jessica F. Cruz and Mikel W. Schwab, counsel for Johnson and co-defendants, filed last week a status report about the plaintiffs' petition.

Cruz and Schwab said the defendants anticipate a final agency decision by the USCIS California Service Center by the end of the week or early next week.

Cruz and Schwab said they will notify the plaintiffs and the court as soon as the final agency decision has been issued.

The lawyers requested the court that the stay or suspension of the proceedings be continued and that defendants be permitted to file another status report when the final agency decision is issued or in another 30 days.

The parties reported to court last September, that the USCIS Administrative Appeal Office has remanded to USCIS California Service Center for further review Angando's petition for CW-1 permit for Masud.

The parties said the USCIS Administrative Appeal Office has withdrawn its decision in this matter.

The parties disclosed that the USCIS Administrative Appeal Office reopened Angando's petition and remanded it to USCIS California Service Center for further review.

The U.S. government's position is that the administrative process must be exhausted in order for Masud and Angando to proceed with their lawsuit.

The parties then agreed to request the court to stay or suspend the case and vacate defendants' response deadline pending the final decision of USCIS.

The lawyers agreed to provide the court with a status report every 60 days.

USCIS denied Masud's and Angando's petition for CW-1 permit on the grounds that the employer had not established that he was lawfully present in the CNMI at the time the petition was filed.

The plaintiffs asserted that Masud obtained an umbrella permit in 2009, which proved he was lawfully present in the Commonwealth.

Horey said the umbrella permit was a two-year permit issued prior to Nov. 28, 2009, by CNMI Labor, Department of Commerce, or the Attorney General's Office.

Horey said the umbrella permit remained valid through Nov. 27, 2011.

The lawyer said that, on Nov. 27, 2011, Angando mailed to USCIS a petition for CW-1 worker classification for Masud.

In 2012, the USCIS California Service Center denied the petition on the basis that Angando had not presented evidence that Masud was lawfully present in the CNMI at the time the application was filed.

Angando appealed.

In February 2015, the Administrative Appeals Office upheld the denial. This prompted Masud and Angando to file the lawsuit.

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. and 18 of its foreign workers recently filed a lawsuit against Johnson and other federal officials over the delay of CUC's petition to renew the workers' CW-1 permits.

Last Jan. 13, the federal government announced that the final rule "Enhancing Opportunities for H-1B1, CW-1, and E-3 Non-immigrants and EB-1 Immigrants," which amends the regulations so as to authorize continued employment for CW-1 nonimmigrants if a petitioner has timely filed a petition requesting an extension of stay, is scheduled to be published in the Federal Register on Jan. 15, 2016, and will be effective 30 days from the date of publication.

COURT INTERNS FERDIE DE LA TORRE
Superior Court Associate Judge Joseph N. Camacho and court officials gather for a photo with six Marianas High School cooperative training program interns on Friday, the last day of the students' internship.

Commonwealth Cancer Association
AWARENESS•EDUCATION•HOPE

2016 CCA Board of Directors &
GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING NOTICE

The Commonwealth Cancer Association is inviting the community, cancer survivors, friends, and supporters to its annual general membership meeting on Thursday, January 21, 2016 at 5:30 PM at the CCA conference room in Gualo Rai.

The agenda will include the president's 2015 annual report as well as the treasurer's financial report. Immediately after the annual/financial reports, election of three (3) board members will commence. Nominations for board members will be accepted in advance via email and/or on the floor.

To submit a board nomination, or more information contact CCA at 682-0050 or email at ccamarianas@gmail.com

MEETING NOTICE

Technical Project Planning Meeting
Former Tanapag Fuel Farm Above Ground Storage Tank Removal Project

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers announces that it will convene a Technical Project Planning meeting to engage public participation regarding the Former Tanapag Fuel Farm Above Ground Storage Tank (AST) Removal project. A presentation has been prepared to provide an overview of the AST removal process and cleanup standards at the former AST locations.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers representatives will be available during the meeting to receive your comments and to answer your questions regarding elements of the project.

Meeting Date: Thursday, January 21, 2016
Meeting Time: 5:30 pm
Tanapag Middle School Cafeteria
Tanapag, Saipan, CNMI

You may also submit written comments regarding the project to:

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Honolulu Engineer District
Programs and Project Management Division
Environmental Branch
Building 230
CEPOH-PP-E (Helene Takemoto)
Fort Shafter, HI 96858-5440
Fax: 808-835-4129.
E-mail: FUDS-POH@usace.army.mil

KHS alumnus excels in Air Force Academy

Kagman High School alumnus Paolo Josef F. Reyes is only in his second semester at the United States Air Force Academy in Colorado but has already made a name for himself on campus.

According to Reyes' parents, Pepito and Malou, he had already made the Dean's List where he ranks 38th out of 1,144 military cadets.

The young Reyes, his father added, also exceeded on what is expected from a cadet of his grade and experience to earn commandant in the military rank.

The Academy in El Paso County in Colorado Springs is a military school for the United States Air Force. Graduates of their four-year academic program receive a Bachelor of Science degree and hold second lieutenant posts once commissioned in the U.S. Air Force.

Reyes

Reyes, who graduated salutatorian last year, was the recipient of CNMI Commissioner's Award for having the second highest grade point average of KHS' 2015 graduating class.

He also received subject area awards in Science, Social Studies, and Japanese, and earned the gold medal for the President's Education Award Program of Outstanding Academic Award. He also ranked second in the Top 10 Outstanding Academic Achievement awardees.

Reyes was also KHS' Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps battalion commander for two straight years earning the rank of colonel and also received the JROTC Commendation Medal.

His father Pepito, who is a native of Mabitac, Laguna in Southern Luzon, works as an architect at the Department of Public Works, while his mother Malou is from Bocaue, Bulacan, north of Luzon and is an accountant at the Commonwealth Utilities Corp.

Reyes is the youngest of three children. He has an older sister, Marie Louchelle R. Menchavez and an older brother Josef Pepito F. Reyes. ***(Jon Perez)***

CCA general membership meeting tomorrow

The Commonwealth Cancer Association is inviting the community, cancer survivors, friends, and supporters to its annual general membership meeting tomorrow, Jan. 21, 2016, at 5:30pm at the CCA conference room in Gualo Rai.

The agenda will include the president's 2015 annual report as well as the treasurer's financial report. There will also be an election of three board members. Nominations for board members will be accepted in advance via email and/or on the floor. To submit a board nomination or for more information, contact CCA at 682-0050 or email at ccamarianas@gmail.com. ***(CCA)***

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

January 20, 2000

CNMI bans cyanide fishing

The Northern Marianas government has banned the use of cyanide in harvesting fish and other marine resources in its waters after Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio signed a landmark law declaring the practice a criminal offense. Under Public Law 11-112, cyanide fishing carries jail sentence of up to three years, a fine of not less than $10,000 or both, for every violation. The Division of Fish and Wildlife is tasked to enforce the ban. Mr. Tenorio urged lawmakers to widen the ban to include other chemicals and methods used by fishermen in exploiting the island's rich fish stock and other marine life. While there are no official statistics on the extent of cyanide fishing practice in the Commonwealth, reports indicate that there has been an "alarming increase" of such activities in the vast waters of Indo-Pacific region.

Garment exports post growth

Saipan's billion-dollar garment manufacturing industry apparently remains unperturbed by flak the sector gets from its mainland U.S. bashers as the CNMI government reported significant growth in apparel exports last year. The Quarterly Economic Review released by the CNMI Department of Commerce noted that total apparel exports from April to June last year reached $256 million. The figure is over $40 million higher than the 1998 first quarter tally of $216.2 million, although lower than the average $260 million quarterly garment export in 1998. For the whole of 1998, Saipan's garment manufacturing industry exported over $1 billion worth of apparel products. Government officials are not likely to rely heavily on the industry's second quarter growth, however.

January 20, 2005

ECO Air to start operations without Saipan Stopover

Eco Airlines will commence air services from Brisbane to the Central Pacific next month without the planned stopover on Saipan, as the carrier has yet to secure the approval of the U.S. Department of Transportation. The Australia-based, start-up airline will be providing the services initially on a weekly, unscheduled charter basis and will be operating two routes. The first service will take passengers from Brisbane to Pohnpei, with a stopover in Honiara. The second will fly from Brisbane to Tarawa, the main atoll of Kiribati and onto Majuro in the Marshall Islands before returning to Brisbane. He added that Eco Airlines will be providing a service transporting fresh Australian food products into all destinations and returning with fresh seafood for the Australian market.

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

Judiciary Administrative Office
Guma' Hustisia · Iimwal Aweewe · House of Justice
P.O. Box 502165 · Saipan MP 96950
T: (670) 236-9715 · F: (670) 236-9702

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) Judiciary is seeking a highly motivated individual for the position of:

***PRO SE* CLIENT SERVICE ASSISTANT**
On the island of SAIPAN

DUTIES: The successful candidate will work under the general supervision of the Presiding Judge of the Commonwealth Superior Court and direct supervision of the Manager of the Family Court or his/her designee. The duties of this position include, but are not limited to the following:

- Assist Pro Se clients when they come to the Family Court Division seeking assistance in filing their case;
- Assist in the development and enhancement of the Family Court Pro Se Court Services program for family violence cases;
- Maintain and promote positive workflow with Victim Advocates and all other agencies involved in the processing and distribution of family protection cases / TRO (FP/TRO);
- Participate in court and special hearings for all family protection cases;
- Assist the courtroom clerks with docketing and scheduling of hearings for FP/TRO and criminal domestic violence cases;
- Assist in the distribution of orders, pleadings and other documents in FP/TRO and criminal domestic violence cases;
- Coordinate and schedule home assessments as well as process referral orders for those court clients referred to social mental health services;
- Conduct interviews of court clients and their families; analyze the information, identify possible problem areas, make recommendations concerning the case, and make referrals to other social service agencies;
- Input case information into the Justware Case Management System and the Lexis Nexus E-filing system;
- Attend the monthly Family Violence Task Force meetings;
- Assist in planning and coordination of domestic violence training conferences;
- Maintain and monitor the Victims of Crime Act formula grant program's goals and objectives which will include the preparation of quarterly reports, compilation of case statistics and processing of purchase requisitions, and;
- Adhere to and comply with all promulgated policies, standards and codes of ethical conduct;
- Perform other related duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS: The *Pro Se* Client Service Assistant should have High School Diploma or equivalent from an accredited college with an Associate of Arts (AA) degree in social work, criminal justice, or related service, plus one (1) year of experience in clerical, data collection, or similar field. Successful candidate must provide current police and traffic clearances and proof of eligibility to work in the CNMI. Applicants given a conditional offer of employment with the CNMI Judiciary will be required to submit to urinalysis to screen for the illegal use of drugs prior to employment.

COMPENSATION AND TENURE: This position is appointed by and serves at the pleasure of the Presiding Judge. Salary will be $18,000 annually.

INTERESTED PERSONS may obtain application forms at the OPM offices in the CNMI, at the Judiciary Administrative Office at the Guma Hustisia/Iimwal Aweewe/House of Justice in Susupe, or at the Superior Court offices on Tinian and Rota. Completed applications, cover letter, and three references should be submitted to:

Human Resources
Guma Hustisia/Iimwal Aweewe/House of Justice
P.O. Box 502165
Saipan, MP 96950
Tel. (670)236-9818
Fax. (670) 236-9702
michelle.guerrero@justice.gov.mp

This job announcement will remain open until filled. Also, this job announcement can be seen and a printable copy of the application downloaded at http://www.justice.gov.mp.

THE CNMI JUDICIARY IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PROVIDER AND EMPLOYER.

WANTED

NEWS REPORTER

The *Saipan Tribune* is looking for a FULL-TIME news reporter.

QUALIFICATIONS

- Above average writing skills and can work within deadlines;
- Fast learner, self-starter, and a team player;
- Computer literate;
- With photography skills;
- Must have reliable means of transportation.

If you have what it takes to be part of a dynamic team, email your résumé and samples of your work to editor@saipantribune.com. You may also drop it off at the *Saipan Tribune* office on the second floor of the JP Center Building on Beach Road, Garapan. ON-ISLAND HIRES PREFERRED.

Saipan Tribune, Inc. is an equal opportunity employer.
Qualified women, minorities, and disabled persons are encouraged to apply.

San Nicolas: Tinian projects moving forward

Mayor Joey P. San Nicolas and the Tinian leadership have worked together to push the renovation and rehabilitation of Tinian Municipal Buildings project forward.

With the support of Gov. Ralph DLG Torres, Capital Improvement Project office, Commonwealth Development Authority, and other government agencies with funding coming from Public Law 17-8 bond money, the project is well on its way.

As soon as the contract is finalized, the shovel will hit the ground and the Municipality of Tinian & Aguiguan will see renovation and rehabilitation work on the Tinian Farmer's Market Building, the Tinian Youth Center, and the Little League Facility.

Upon execution of the contract, the contractor will complete the project within 240 calendar days.

This move forward is only the beginning for the municipality and again emphasizes San Nicolas' and the Tinian Leadership's commitment to projects that will improve public services for the people of Tinian.

San Nicolas

In this case, island residents will see work on municipal buildings that will assist Tinian's local farmers and much needed programs for the youth.

"I am proud of this work and the project that will begin. I want our people of Tinian to know that we will continue to push this project and other projects that will benefit our people as well as boost our economy," said San Nicolas

Funding for TSA, CBP facilities at Tinian airport

With reports of potentially four investors expressing interest in providing direct flights to the Tinian International Airport, Commonwealth Ports Authority director Kimberlyn King-Hinds, through her motion during a recent CPA board meeting and the support of the CPA board, approved $1.5 million from CPA funds for the design and construction of a TSA and CBP counter at the Tinian International Airport facility. The amount was determined as initial funding with the potential of a supplemental budget down the line if needed. The TSA and CBP facilities are crucial to ensuring the arrival and departure of direct flights to Tinian.

"I want to take this opportunity to extend our sincerest appreciation and *Un Sen Dangkulu Na Si Yu'us Ma'ase* on behalf of the people of Tinian for this critical step forward toward supporting Tinian's economy," said San Nicolas. ***(Tinian and Aguiguan Mayor's Office)***

Regents: Removal of members governed by law and policy

In response to recent interest regarding the Northern Marianas College Board of Regents to remove its own board members, the board issued a statement to clarify that its power and authority to remove any regent from the board are governed by statute and its own policies.

According to the statement, the law is codified in 3 CMC Section 1314, and the policy is Policy 1018, Removal from Office. Both the statute and the policy are available online for review. The public is invited to review the statute by visiting the website of the CNMI Law Revision Commission, and the policy by visiting the website of the Northern Marianas College.

The statute is general in saying that a regent may be removed for unexcused absences from meetings and for incompetence, neglect of duty, or malfeasance.

The policy, on the other hand, is more specific. It states that the grounds the Board of Regents have to remove a regent are: Physical or Mental Incapability; Loss of Residency; Failure to Attend Meetings; Conviction of a Felony (or any offense involving a violation of his/her official duties); Commitment to a Hospital (for specified reasons); and Failure to Perform Oath of Office.

To view the Board of Regents policies regarding the authority of board members, visit marianas.edu. ***(NMC)***

BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUTS

CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Goodwill celebrated his birthday recently at Ms. Josie Kaipat's KHS NMI history class.

Taylor Takami celebrated his birthday recently at Ms. Josie Kaipat's KHS NMI history class.

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Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
Volume XXVI, Issue No. 13

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EDITORIAL

A voice silenced in Gaza

Like Winston Smith after his "re-education" in "1984," or Randle McMurphy after his lobotomy in "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest," Ayman al-Aloul seems to have been vanquished by the authorities.

Al-Aloul is a journalist in the Gaza Strip. As editor of the Arab Now agency, he wrote about the quality of life in that depressing, overcrowded sliver of oceanfront territory, and about the failings of the Hamas government that runs it. He has posted photos of Gazans scrounging for food in garbage containers and has blamed Hamas for power blackouts. In a society in which such internal criticism is rare, he stood out.

So much so that on Jan. 3, al-Aloul was arrested. When he was released nine days later, he announced that he won't be writing about the government's failings anymore. In an interview with the Associated Press, he described being beaten in jail and sent to a room known as "the bus," where he was bound painfully to a tiny chair for an entire day. He was repeatedly slapped in the face during his incarceration, he said.

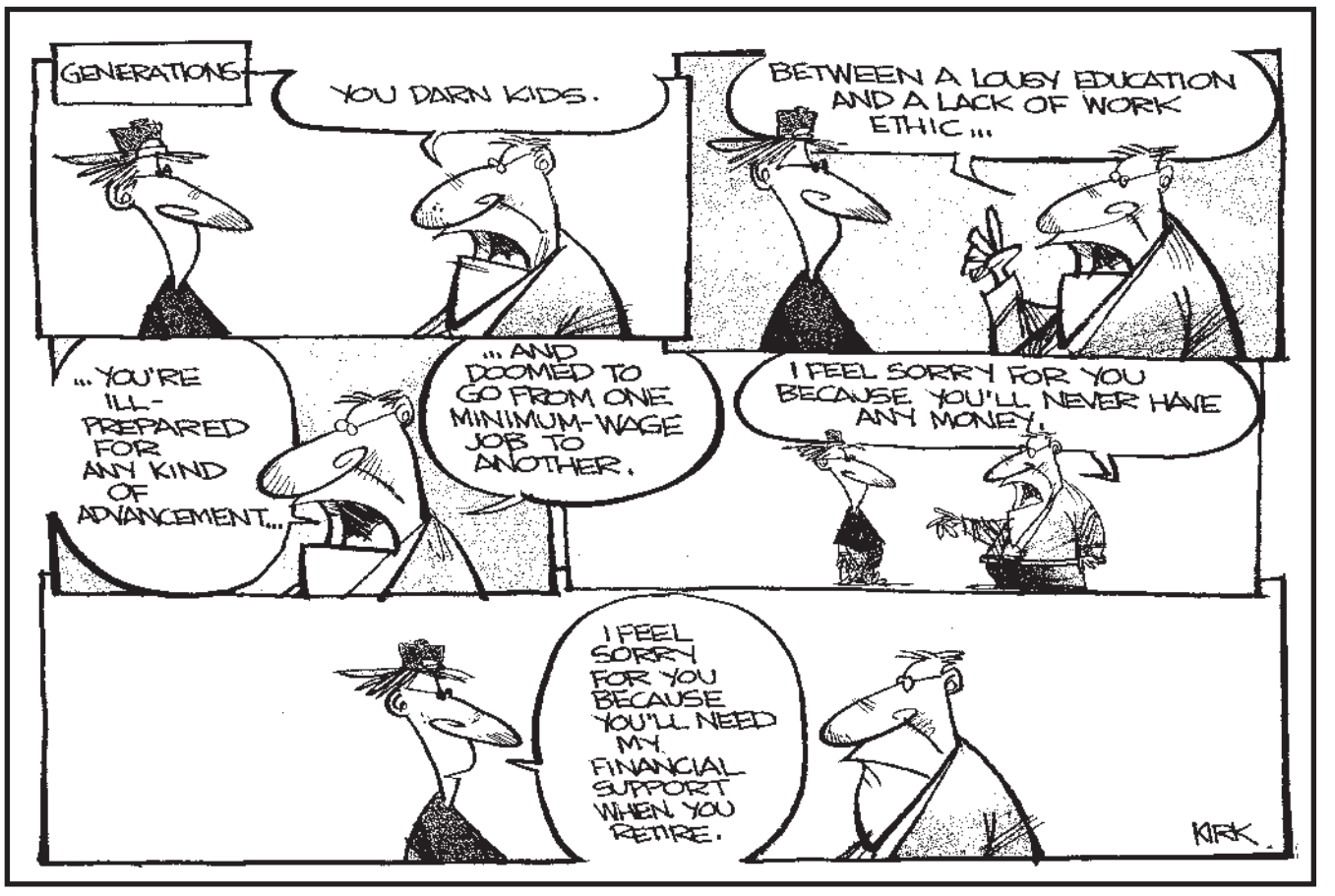
"I've decided not to talk about the general situation anymore," he said. "The experience I went through was very difficult."

In the future, al-Aloul told the AP, he will focus on more anodyne topics like sports, food, literature and fashion.

The mistreatment of journalists in the Arab world is nothing new, of course. For years, Hamas in Gaza and the Palestinian Authority in the West Bank have harassed, detained and beaten them, shut down their publications and confiscated their equipment, according to Human Rights Watch.

Al-Aloul's story isn't the most egregious example of media suppression in the world. But it is particularly sad—heartbreaking, really—to see a journalist acknowledge so frankly that he has been defeated. In Gaza—where Palestinians live under a punishing Israeli blockade, unemployment is running at 43 percent, poverty is relentless, war has become familiar, and democracy simply doesn't exist—people who write honestly and independently are badly needed but in short supply. Incidents like this one only discourage others from filling that role.

(c) 2016 Los Angeles Times


GENERATIONS
YOU DARN KIDS.
BETWEEN A LOUSY EDUCATION AND A LACK OF WORK ETHIC...
...YOU'RE ILL-PREPARED FOR ANY KIND OF ADVANCEMENT...
...AND DOOMED TO GO FROM ONE MINIMUM-WAGE JOB TO ANOTHER.
I FEEL SORRY FOR YOU BECAUSE YOU'LL NEVER HAVE ANY MONEY.
I FEEL SORRY FOR YOU BECAUSE YOU'LL NEED MY FINANCIAL SUPPORT WHEN YOU RETIRE.
KIRK

Stories my neighbor tells

By JAIME VERGARA
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Jaime Vergara previously taught at SVES in the CNMI. A peripatetic pedagogue, he last taught in China but makes Honolulu, Shenyang, and Saipan home. He can be reached at pinoypanda2031@aol.com. All views expressed by the author are his/her own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion and stance of the Saipan Tribune.

I remember MLK Jr. day dubbed as a "day on" rather than a "day off." I was dressed to hit all the offices I had on my list only to find out that it was a CNMI official holiday. So I went to the beach, the only decent thing to do on a holiday, isn't it?

He is retired, a sprite vacationer to Florida, drives his wife to NMC and shops at 87. He tells stores and I am "all ears" to that.

When I sub-taught, the students' imagination flew often on interstellar travel and outer space settlements when asked of their dreams. One declared that he was a citizen of the universe after he heard me say I was a "global citizen." His imagination is replete with rocket ships and outer space speeds. It plays electronic games, which strategize on how to win conflicts in otherworldly settings!

He and his peers are in the "do the impossible" mindset. No quarrels there. Unless they totally ignore the here-and-now, which often is a concrete spacetime we run away from, a pity since many demonstrate levelheaded intelligence and considerable wit.

I've written of a few incidences when my neighbor's quote drove my point home, but object lessons are not his intent, and neither is it primarily mine. I do delight in passing on his stories because they are simply good to hear (in this case, read), told with an authentic voice from the Bronx.

Once he angled for sympathy after walking a distance and was tired, so he asked a lady occupying a good portion of a bench to move a bit so he can rest his 8-decade-old body frame on the seat, he said. The lady, no dummy, told him to quit whining, as she needs the space more than he did by size and age. She was much older too, she said. Curious how old the heavyset lady was, he inquired. The lady said she gets around by bus but drives long distances and pulled out a driver's license to prove it. She was 99 years of age.

After a few exchanges and banter, he turned flippant and bemused, asked if she still "fooled around." She didn't miss a beat. "Back it up," she said, and he understood that he had better put his body where his curiosity was, or shut up. My neighbor did not say how he responded (this was three years ago), but does it really matter?

We'll let the erotic mind wander without further pander. We had been blue-penciled a couple of times so we won't invite another.

My 86 projected years of existence is frequently subjected to questions of revision, the most recent being a suggestion that given the state of my health, I should revise my story and start using 96 rather than 86.

I am not sure. Henry and Elizabeth Van Dusen were sickly in their late 70s in the '70s, and at Union Theological Seminary of NYC, they gave respectability to the practice of euthanasia. While I am not even inclined to commit actual and/or metaphorical self-immolation when I reach 86, I am clear from rapidly deteriorating muscular and nerve endings that I will not be a happy camper for any existential distractions if I lasted that long, except if I ran into a fat lady of 99 who dares me to put my body where my curiosity is, in which case, I might go for 87!

But it is my neighbor and the treasure of his accumulated stories that got my attention, or the fancy of my pen, which I now seldom use since I've gotten comfortable with the keyboard. Many folks his age prefer to focus on embellished memories 20 years earlier unable to tell what really transpired in the last 20 hours. My neighbor, even with senior moments, just frankly tells it like it is, 20 years ago, or 20 hours before!

Telling stories is the way we articulate what we know. Marshall McLuhan coined the word "global village" to relay his sense of oneness. He understood that our images are our reality. The flat earth people who claim that NASA engineered the shots on the moon from earth-based laboratories will not be swayed by "facts." The flatness of the earth is their "fact," their reality, and unless the image of their reality changes, they will retain their "fact."

Educators have long known that everyone operates out of images. Images determine behavior. Images can change. A change in image results in a change of behavior. And, of course, for those interested in changing history, when behavior changes, history changes as well. Mathematicians say the same thing with their chaos and relativity theories, but we've ploughed that field before.

Pedagogy and exams that solely use words and numbers are unproductive. I am just as guilty as the next pedagogue in being comfortable with words and numbers. We are trained that way, and save for shapes in geometry and equations in algebra, we are blandly prosaic. Still, it's my neighbor's stories that delight me, and whether he is intentional in the act of storytelling, and thus, as a consequence, paints images, I cannot tell. Does it matter? The fact remains that images are created and incidences of change occur.

My neighbor assures me that the fat lady has yet to sing even now at 102!

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Geneftau Sensian Karidat

Gi maseha haf` na mattiru `sino chinatsaga i tradision relihion-ta fitme na pogse` karidat ni sumustene natibu deste antigu na tiempu. Huli`e gineftau tautau-ta ni muna` ma`aggem-yu` gi halom rimulinon chinatsaga. Onrau na sahyan kuttura-ta ni mibendision katma yan trañkilida.

Patte gi kustumbre-ta i assistimienton gi dos saina piot `nai man-malañgu. Mauleg para i matriatkan yan patriatkan familia kontodu i famaguon ni sumakrifisia siha pot mañainan niha.

Hu mente este pot huli`e sanlagu pinadesen dos amko` ni mapega gi fina` guma` `sino fasilidat `nai haf` tetehnan gi guinahan niha ma-usa para apas. Ayu `nai manmafattu famaguon niha dispues de madispone sainan niha. Dañkulu i difirensia gi entalu` dos kuttura.

Huli`e lokue` finatai un` biha ni umahnanau ti umasagua. Gi `nai umagoninias ayu ha` ilelegña ni umatiende-gue`, "Si Yuus Maase`!" Ha repite este na fino`ña estake machum mataña. Mit grasias para i parentela siha ni umasiste ayu na amko` estake mapega gi sagaña.

Mit grasias para todu i umekstende kanai niha ayudu para i man-malañgu, man-chatsaga yan te`ug na mattirun pinepble yan otru siha assistimientu. Megai para un` rikohe na regalu fuera de satisfichu na siñiente pot gineftau korason-mu.

Risakin Destrosiu

Guaha masusesede ni malolofan gi papa` guieñg-ta diariu. Kulan manmama` i taguan hit `nai to sotta papa-ta no siakassu. I mamamaila` parehu yan loglug guafen botkan ni siempre un` dia seguru na ha destrosia hit.

Yangin in` ekuñgog i mafanana`an ni man-amko` "chechop linala`" siempre in` li`e na diariu sige mas uma`gañg i burukan achu` guafe taduñg gi papa` tanu`. Yangin un` dia u pagpag ennau na botkan tat ti u destrosia guine.

I guafe ni husasañgan ti ayu i mañiñila`. Gaige este gi hechuran disposision un` grupon bisnis guine ginen hiyuñg ni adumididi` sige ha choneg planuña para tafan mafa` esklabu gi karera mona. Para u emplea kasi 2,000 na tautau-ta. Nahoñg na numeru para u dikta kinalamten sisteman gobietnu guine.

Lache este na intension. Gi papa` sisteman demokrasia gaige fuetsan disposision linahyan gi tautau. Hita `nai gaige ennau na direchu. Ahe` ti para tasede ginen hiyuñg na kometsiante mandispone guine `nai para manman-osge ha` nina` siñata kulan galagun chalan.

Sensian Menhalom

I sensian minenhalom sumede hit pumula` ensegidas haf` na mañan tautau gaige gi menata. Ti mapot na dibina sa` kinihaye ni mañaña sin ditension. Libianu tali`e` kau pitbetsu, presonidu, fagahot, saguat, tramposu, amtau, kabilosu, makatrefi, kabron, su`anu, luhuriosu, tarugu, malagradesidu, tattamudu, dotmiladu, tomtum, mahatot, manatma, pat chapuseru.

Hu saulag tupag este na midision gi dinagau `nos kuantos kuestion. Gigon ha aka` i katnada hu hala halom esta i lagua`hu. Ayu `nai hu abirigua gi malago`hu.

Mina` hu mente este na asuntu pot umasoda`yu` yan un` hobensitu ni motmut respetu, tomtum, yan su`anu inepeña gi kuestion-hu siha. Hana` ma`aggem siñienteg-hu pot hasan huli`e sumen respetau na patgon na tiempu. Ti todu kinalamteña ha espepehos haf` kinalamten halom gima niha. Mahayu fitme deste bittun respetu yan tradision tanu`.

Ni un` patgon mafañagu yan paketin kinemprende haf` che`chu` tautau. Debi u fan mafanague ni mañainan niha. Este na patte `nai humalom i dos saina sin ditension kumu siha primet maestron famaguon niha gi halom guma`.

Deste liñguahe yan kuttura siha man-responsapble gi todu finana`gue. Yangin ti un` petsige fehman este na responsapblidat pues un` sede famaguon man-lachog kulan dineku` sakaten kabayu gi katkuet lugat.

I halom guma` yan hafa un` impatta mauleg gi patgon `nai gaige hatdin familia-mu. Ni haye na menhalom siempre ensegidas hali`e haf` pinayon patgon-mu dispues de ha diñgu i pettan sanmena. Na`e animu pot futtunan niha.

Linala` Un` Biyinariu

Mafaisen untat George Koch, un` biyinariu ginen New York, haf` na felis todu bisnis familiaña ni tinituhon tataña. Ti mapot na ineppe hasañgane i gaseteru: "Chogue nina` siñamu gi haf` `nai mas mauleg hau na offisiu".

Ha esplika na i sensian integredat prumohibegue` che`chu` chapuseru pot ambeteria. I hinimidde umestablese na ti todu ha tuñgu`. Poresu na man-empleha ni tumuñgu haf` mas `nai siña ma-adelanta produktu siha para todus gi enteru metkau gi tanu`. Gi idat 75 años ni unabes `nai mattu hinassoña dumeskansa. "Mientras mas mamatinas-yu` salape` mas megai na ayudu para i mas man-namase` siha gi todo patte gi tanu`."

By JOHN S. DELROSARIO JR.
Special to the Saipan Tribune

John DelRosario Jr. is a former publisher of the Saipan Tribune *and a former secretary of the Department of Public Lands. All views expressed by the author are his/her own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion and stance of the* Saipan Tribune.

Dañkkulu na leksion gi modun mañaña pot finatinas fiñkas `nos pot para guiya lau para i man-namase` siha entalu` iya Africa yan otru patte siha gi enteru i tanu`. I felis na finaposña gaige ha` giya guiya fitme na sensian integredat, hinimidde yan yine`ase` gi ti muna` siña giya siha namaisa. Para i kantidan salape`ña libianu masetbe gi katkuet manera. Lau humuyuñg macho`chu` diariu pot alibiun ha`anen mas man-namase`. Geftau na sensian kilisyanu.

Tinituhon Popble

Un` lemlem tautau hu konsidedera finatton un` familia ni dumiñgu chagu` tanu` niha pot inaligau mas mauleg na appottunidat para famaguon niha.

Kumu ginen este yan man-apapase-yu` aduana (tax) libianu bai` buruka na debi u bira siha tatte gi tanu` niha. Dos yu` chumoma`:

I konsensiag-hu sa` hu komprende finu` i Saina para tana` fan geftau hit gi man-namase`.

Ginen un` popblen guma`yu` lokue` `nai dumañkulu.

Ensegidas huli`e finapos-hu gi fina` espehos. Megai `nai in` fagcha`e ni mona ni tatte. Ha rikohe ham si nanan mame gi fina` tinayuyot ` lisayu kada pueñge. Dispues `nai umanog fina` ayudu siha ginen mañeluña.

Ayu na finapos mame fuetsau man-eyag ham man-macho`chu` `nai in` agradese balin i dididi` na moneda ni in` presenta gi mañainan mame. Hana` fan unestu yan humidde mañan todus gi makat na mattiru siha. Dimas de bai fan gasta otguyu gi ayu na familia mas pas siñienteg-hu gi fehman na tinayuyot ya u soda` lokue` ginefsagan niha para mona.

Na fan geftau hamyu gi prohimu ni numesessita ayudu-mu. Si Iku.

Sexual assaults in Germany highlight the need of immigrants to assimilate

The polarized debate about the West's treatment of refugees from Syria and other war-torn regions in the Middle East has taken a nasty new turn with reports of a massive wave of sexual assaults on women in Germany on New Year's Eve. While details are murky, it appears the terrifying attacks, in which women near the Cologne train station were surrounded, groped and robbed, were perpetrated by a mob of men of North African and Middle Eastern background, including recent migrants.

To some, this validates dire warnings about an invasion of the West by dangerous foreigners and even Donald Trump's call to close our borders to Muslims. Others see the outcry as religious and racial bigotry.

The attacks in Cologne, and reports of similar sexual violence in European cities, shock the conscience. Further stoking passions, Cologne Mayor Henriette Reker advised women to adopt a "code of conduct" for protection. While safety tips are not "victim-blaming" and some of the mayor's advice was sensible — for instance, to alert the police if assaulted—the "code" included the absurd suggestion to keep at arm's length from strangers. Indeed, a female "code of conduct" to ward off sexual assault sounded like a slippery slope to the burqa.

No less disturbing was the response of some progressives, so intent on not blaming the "oppressed" as to turn into politically correct caricatures. The online magazine Vice ran a piece by two German feminists asserting that migrants are not the problem because "Germany's rape culture is deeply rooted in our collective psyche." Their examples include being hugged by drunken strangers or deliberately splashed with beer at Oktoberfests. But there's a world of difference between overly familiar tipplers at revelries where both women and men let down their inhibitions, and a hostile mob that treats women as prey.

In the left-wing British paper The Guardian, columnist Gaby Hinsliff suggested that deprived young migrant men may have been striking out in resentment at young women they see as privileged. Others suggested that we should blame all men instead of all migrants or Muslims. And financial commentator Frances Coppola speculated that the attacks were somehow engineered by anti-immigration forces.

Granted, the right has had its share of bizarre responses, exemplified by the Twitter hashtag #rapefugees. Centrist Christina Hoff Sommers, whose critiques of modern feminism have made her popular with many conservatives, drew some right-wing ire merely by tweeting that "to blame all Muslim immigrants or refugees is to be like gender warriors who blame all men."

Some right-wing commentators, including National Review's Andrew McCarthy, have claimed that the sexual assaults are a deliberate strategy of conquest — a "rape jihad" — comparable to the sexual enslavement of women by the Islamic State and sanctioned by the Quran.

By CATHY YOUNG
Newsday

Cathy Young is a regular contributor to Reason *magazine and the website RealClearPolitics. This was written for* Newsday.

There is zero evidence that the Cologne assailants were motivated by religious zealotry. However, it is a fact that in many societies with extreme patriarchal traditions, women in public places — particularly if they are "immodestly" dressed — are seen as fair game for sexual attacks. Religion and culture both play roles. There is no question that some migrants bring those attitudes with them.

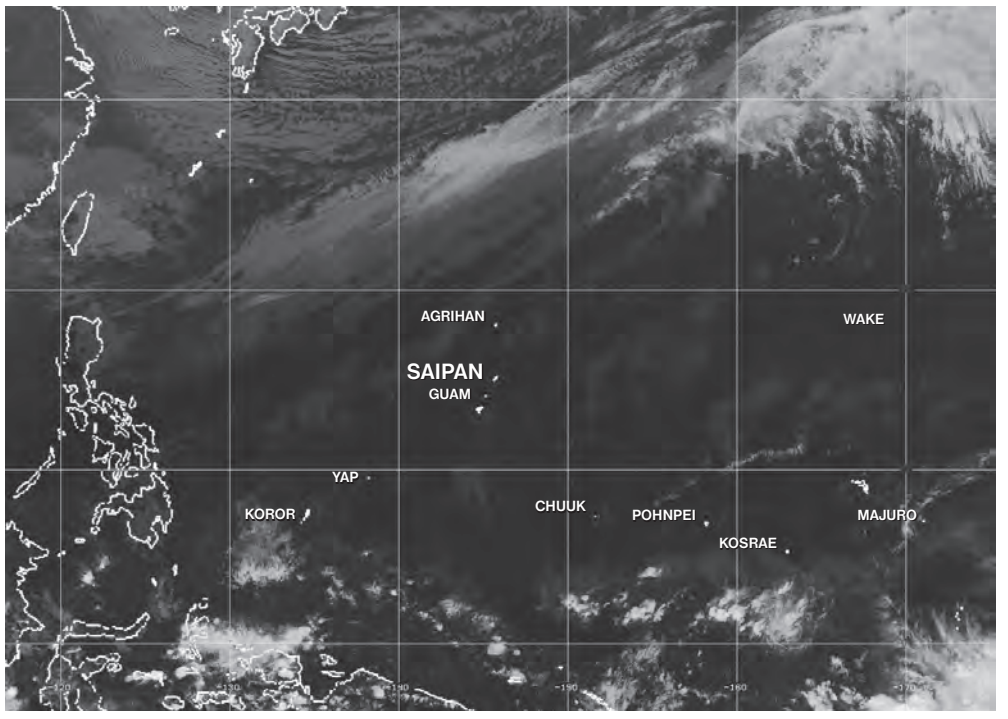
Rejection of ethnic and religious bigotry is a hard-won Western value — as is gender equality. But if the West is to preserve the culture that makes those values possible, immigration must be combined with effective policies that require immigrants to respect the legal and moral codes of their new homes.

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Mostly sunny with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 10 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲85° ▼73°	▲85° ▼73°	▲85° ▼73°	▲85° ▼74°	▲85° ▼74°

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:07 PM, TUESDAY, JANUARY 19, 2016
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A cold front runs southwestward from 25N150E to beyond 130E at 16N. Cloudiness with scattered showers and a few thunderstorms are along and up to 350 miles northwest of the front. This includes the Iwo To area. A dry trade-wind flow dominates most of Micronesia while low-level convergence is causing widely scattered showers southeast of Koror within 100 miles of a line from 6N133E to 1N145E south of Chuuk and Pohnpei within 150 miles of a line from 3N150E to 4N160E and near Majuro and Wotje atolls between 10N and 8N from 168E to 175E. Widely scattered showers and a few thunderstorms are also just south of Kosrae between 6N and the equator from 160E to 165E.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

Micronesia

Guam And Rota	Showers	▲84	▼77
Palau	Partly Cloudy	▲88	▼77
Yap	Showers	▲86	▼77
Chuuk	Partly Cloudy	▲85	▼79
Pohnpei	Partly Cloudy	▲88	▼79
Kosrae	Mostly Cloudy	▲84	▼80
Majuro	Partly Cloudy	▲85	▼80

Around the Globe

Auckland	Partly Cloudy	▲80	▼63
Beijing	Partly Cloudy	▲32	▼15
Hong Kong	Showers	▲64	▼62
Honolulu	Mostly Sunny	▲83	▼68
London	Partly Cloudy	▲41	▼32
Los Angeles	Cloudy	▲63	▼54
Manila	Partly Cloudy	▲87	▼74
Melbourne	Cloudy	▲85	▼62
Miami	Partly Cloudy	▲66	▼54
New York	Mostly Sunny	▲31	▼25
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	▲46	▼34
Paris	Sunny	▲40	▼28
Pusan	Mostly Sunny	▲41	▼23
Rome	Mostly Sunny	▲51	▼40
Salem	Rain	▲48	▼43
San Francisco	Rain	▲59	▼50
Seoul	Mostly Sunny	▲27	▼13
Tokyo	Windy	▲51	▼33
Washington, DC	Sunny	▲29	▼17

NMI CRIME STOPPERS
Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:
- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

Tides

Saipan Harbor

5:34 AM	Today	High Tide:	1.6 Feet
10:27 AM	Today	Low Tide:	1.1 Feet
4:00 PM	Today	High Tide:	2.0 Feet
11:33 PM	Today	Low Tide:	-0.2 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:47 AM	6:09 PM
Thursday	6:47 AM	6:09 PM
Friday	6:47 AM	6:10 PM
Saturday	6:47 AM	6:10 PM
Sunday	6:47 AM	6:11 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	2:44 PM	2:54 AM
Thursday	3:38 PM	3:52 AM
Friday	4:33 PM	4:48 AM
Saturday	5:28 PM	5:41 AM
Sunday	6:22 PM	6:32 AM

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF DECEMBER 4, 2015

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA2924	4:15am	5:05am	Daily
UA2922	8:40am	9:30am	Daily
UA2921	1:30pm	3:10pm	1, 4, 5, 7 via Rota
UA2920	2:20pm	3:10pm	2, 3, 6
UA2928	6:05pm	6:55pm	Daily
UA2926	9:50pm	10:40pm	Daily

SAIPAN-ROTA (ROP)

UA2921	1:30pm	2:05pm	1, 4, 5, 7

ROTA (ROP)-GUAM (GUM)

UA2921	2:35pm	3:10pm	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)

DL297	4:20pm	7:10pm	Daily

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

OZ626	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ626	2:50am	6:40am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
OZ628	3:50am	7:40am	Daily
7C3403	4:35am	8:30am	Daily
7C3401	4:30pm	8:25pm	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

OZ608	3:10am	6:20am	4, 7

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)

3U8648	6:10am	8:40am	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)

MU764	1:30am	5:30am	3, 5, 7

SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)

3U8646	4:20am	7:30am	2, 6

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

OZ626/701	2:10am	11:15am	1 via ICN
OZ626/701	2:50am	11:15am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UA2924/191	4:15am	9:00am	3, 6 via GUM
UA2924/PR111	4:15am	9:20am	1, 2, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA2924/183	4:15am	9:30pm	2, 5 via GUM
UA2924/183	4:15am	9:50pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA2922/183	8:40am	9:30pm	2, 5 via GUM
UA2922/183	8:40am	9:50pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA2921/183	1:30pm	9:30pm	5 via Rota-GUM
UA2921/183	1:30pm	9:50pm	1, 4, 7 via Rota-GUM
UA5038/183	2:20pm	9:30pm	2 via GUM
UA5038/183	2:20pm	9:50pm	3, 6 via GUM
UA5072/191	9:50pm	7:20am+1	1, 6 via GUM

SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)

OZ626/721	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN
OZ626/721	2:50am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
OZ628/721	3:50am	12:50am	Daily via ICN
UA2924/159	4:15am	10:35pm	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM
UA2922/159	8:40am	10:35pm	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM
UA2921/159	1:30pm	10:35pm	1, 5 via Rota-GUM
UA2920/159	2:20pm	10:35pm	3, 6 via GUM

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA2923	2:45am	3:35am	Daily
UA2925	7:15am	8:05am	Daily
UA2921	12:10pm	1:00pm	1, 4, 5, 7
UA2920	12:10pm	1:50pm	2, 3, 6 via Rota
UA2927	4:45pm	5:35pm	Daily
UA2929	8:30pm	9:20pm	Daily

GUAM (GUM)-ROTA (ROP)

UA2920	12:10pm	12:45pm	2, 3, 6

ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN

UA2920	1:15pm	1:50pm	2, 3, 6

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

DL298	10:35am	3:10pm	Daily

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

7C3402	10:10am	3:30pm	Daily
OZ625	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ625	8:20pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
OZ627	9:30pm	2:50am+1	Daily
7C3404	10:10pm	3:30am+1	Daily

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

OZ607	9:00pm	1:50am+1	3, 6

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN

3U8647	10:40pm	5:00am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN

MU763	4:30pm	12:30am+1	2, 4, 6

GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN

3U8645	7:40pm	3:00am+1	1, 5

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA190/2929	9:55am	9:20pm	2, 6, 7 via GUM
UA190/2929	10:00am	9:20pm	3 via GUM
OZ702/625	12:30pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ702/625	12:30pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
OZ702/627	12:30pm	2:50am+1	Daily via ICN
PR110/UA2925	10:05pm	8:05am+1	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/2925	10:55pm	8:05am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/2921	10:55pm	1:00pm+1	3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/2920	10:55pm	1:50pm+1	1 via GUM-Rota
UA184/2927	10:55pm	5:35pm+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/2929	10:55pm	9:20pm+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/2925	11:59pm	8:05am+1	2, 5 via GUM
UA184/2920	11:59pm	1:50pm+1	2, 5 via GUM-Rota
UA184/2927	11:59pm	5:35pm+1	2, 5 via GUM
UA184/2929	11:59pm	9:20pm+1	2, 5 via GUM

HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN

OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
OZ724/627	2:20pm	2:50am+1	Daily via ICN
UA116/2925	10:55pm	8:05am+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM
UA116/2921	10:55pm	1:00pm+1	3, 6 via GUM
UA116/2920	10:55pm	1:50pm+1	1, 5 via GUM-Rota
UA116/2927	10:55pm	5:35pm+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM
UA116/2929	10:55pm	9:20pm+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U: Sichuan Airlines; MU: China Eastern; UA: United Airlines; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana; 7C: Jeju AirETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
6:30AM	6:45AM	Mon, Tue,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat
7:30AM	7:45AM	Daily
8:30AM	8:45AM	Daily
9:30AM	9:45AM	Daily
10:30AM	10:45AM	Daily
11:30AM	11:45AM	Daily
12:30NN	12:45NN	Daily
1:30PM	1:45PM	Daily
2:30PM	2:45PM	Daily
3:30PM	3:45PM	Daily
4:30PM	4:45PM	Daily
5:30PM	5:45PM	Daily
6:30PM	6:45PM	Daily

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
7:00AM	7:15AM	Daily
8:00AM	8:15AM	Daily
9:00AM	9:15AM	Daily
10:00AM	10:15AM	Daily
11:00AM	11:15AM	Daily
12:00NN	12:15NN	Daily
1:00PM	1:15PM	Daily
2:00PM	2:15PM	Daily
3:00PM	3:15PM	Daily
4:00PM	4:15PM	Daily
5:00PM	5:15PM	Daily
6:00PM	6:15PM	Daily

SAIPAN TO ROTA

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
7:45AM	8:15AM	Mon, Tues,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat
4:00PM	4:30PM	Mon, Tues,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat

ROTA TO SAIPAN

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
8:30AM	9:00AM	Mon, Tues,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat
4:45PM	5:15PM	Mon, Tues,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat

Business

Why global woes and sinking stocks don't mean US recession

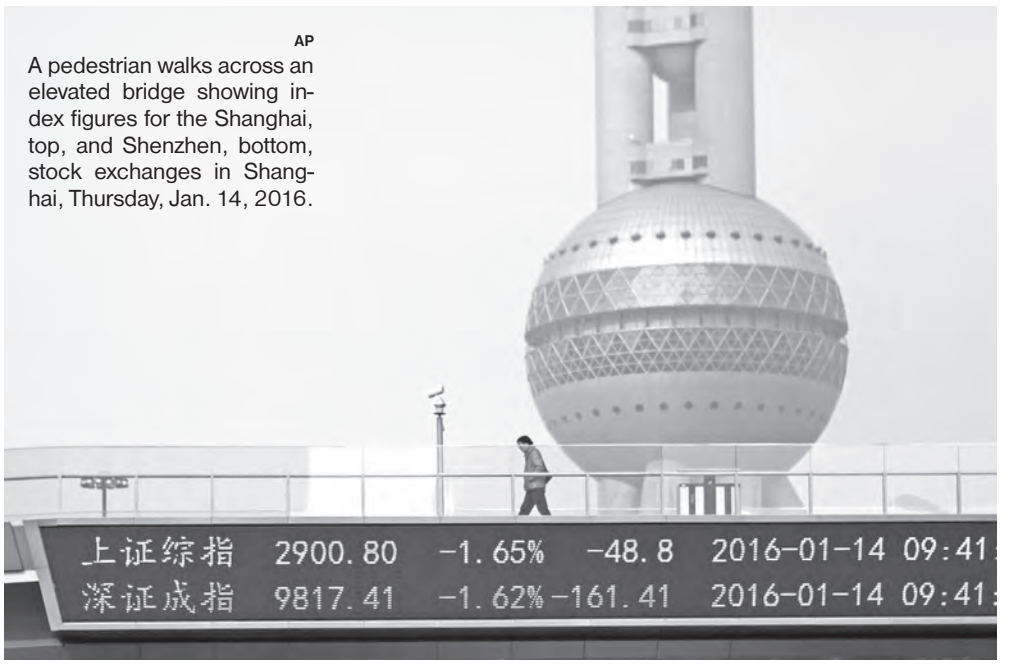
WASHINGTON (AP)—Last week's harrowing plunge in U.S. stocks—fueled by economic fears about China and plummeting oil prices—left investors anxious and alarmed. Some wondered if it signaled an approaching recession in the United States.

The answer, most analysts say, is no.

The American economy is expected to prove resilient and nimble enough to avoid serious damage, at least anytime soon. For all the economy's challenges, the job market is strong, home sales are solid and cheaper gasoline has allowed consumers to spend more on cars, restaurants and online shopping.

The companies that make up major stock indexes are far more vulnerable than the economy itself is to distress abroad: Companies in the Standard & Poor's 500 index derived 48 percent of their revenue from abroad in 2014, up from 43 percent in 2003.

By contrast, exports account for only about 13 percent of the nation's gross domestic product—the broadest gauge of economic output. That's one of the lowest such shares in the world. Exports to China equal just 1 percent of GDP.



AP

A pedestrian walks across an elevated bridge showing index figures for the Shanghai, top, and Shenzhen, bottom, stock exchanges in Shanghai, Thursday, Jan. 14, 2016.

"While the U.S. economy's exposure to China is relatively small, the multinational companies that trade on the stock market are much more exposed," said Mark Zandi, chief economist at Moody's Analytics.

The S&P 500 sank 2.2 percent Friday and has tumbled 8 percent since the year began, deflated by expectations of even lower oil prices ahead and fears that China's once-explosive economy is slowing more than anyone had expected. On Friday, the Xinhua news agency reported that Chinese banks reduced loans last month from a year earlier.

It was the latest sign that China's economy continues to decelerate—an ominous trend for U.S. companies, like heavy-equipment maker Caterpillar, that have significant business there. (Caterpillar shares shed 2.7 percent Friday.)

"For many of these companies, the narrative behind their growth and earnings prospects is China," Zandi said. "If you throw that narrative out, investors get nervous."

The disconnect between the actual economy and the price of stocks isn't new. From the waning days of the Great Recession into the tepid recovery that followed, stocks managed to gradually rise despite persistently high unemployment and tepid economic growth. Now, the opposite seems true.

China growth edges down, fueling anxiety over global outlook

BEIJING (AP)—China's economic growth slowed to a six-year low in the latest quarter as trade and consumer spending weakened, deepening a downturn that has fueled anxiety abroad over its impact on an uncertain global outlook.

The world's second-largest economy grew by 6.8 percent in the October-December quarter, down from the previous quarter's 6.9 percent, data showed Tuesday. That dragged full-year growth to a 25-year low of 6.9 percent.

Growth has fallen steadily over the past five years as the ruling Communist Party tries to steer away from a worn-out model based on investment and trade toward self-sustaining growth driven by domestic consumption and services. But the unexpectedly sharp decline over the past two years prompted fears of a politically dangerous spike in job losses. In 2014, growth was 7.3 percent.

The Chinese slowdown and a plunge in Shanghai stock prices have prompted concern about loss of support from an economy once seen as an engine of global growth. That has depressed international financial markets even as the United States and Europe show signs of improvement.

"Official data do not point to a hard landing in the fourth quarter of 2015, but they provide little reason to stop worrying about China's drag on the global economy, either," said economist Bill Adams of PNC Financial Services Group in a report.

Growth was in line with private sector forecasts and the ruling Communist Party's official target of about 7 percent for the year.

Beijing responded to ebbing growth by cutting interest rates six times since November, 2014, and launched measures to help exporters and other industries. But economists note China still relies on state-led construction spending and other investment.

Full-year 2015 growth was the lowest since sanctions imposed on Beijing following its crackdown on the Tiananmen Square pro-democracy movement caused growth to plummet to 3.8 percent in 1990.

Puerto Rico revises fiscal reform plan amid growing deficit

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP)—Puerto Rico is revising a fiscal and economic reform plan to reflect a jump in the island's projected deficit and steep drop in anticipated revenues, officials said Monday.

The government said the deficit is now projected to grow from $14 billion to $16 billion over the next five years due to the U.S. territory's worsening economic crisis. Officials also told reporters during a conference call that they expect revenue to fall by $1.7 billion over the same period.

The government also extended projections within the five-year plan by another five years at the request of creditors, noting that the deficit could grow to $24 billion by 2025.

The announcement comes as Puerto Rico seeks access to a bankruptcy mechanism as it struggles with $72 billion in public debt that the governor has said is unpayable and needs restructuring. The U.S. territory already has defaulted on several payments and faces its first lawsuit over the government diverting funds to meet certain payments.

The government also has implemented other measures to help maintain liquidity, including deferring payments to suppliers and withholding some $330 million in tax refunds.

"Continuation of these measures is neither sustainable nor in the interest of any stakeholder, as they will only deepen the financial gaps," said Secretary of State Victor Suarez.

The original fiscal reform plan was released in September and addresses only a portion of the island's debt. The plan calls for several measures such as merging state agencies, cutting subsidies to municipalities and extending legislation to freeze new hires and salary increases.

Portions of the plan require legislative approval, but government officials expect to negotiate with creditors soon as they warned that time was running out.

"The information contained in the updated plan makes all the more clear that actions must be taken before the Commonwealth runs out of options to pay its debt and provide essential services to the people of Puerto Rico," said Melba Acosta, president of the Government Development Bank.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Greece seeks swift bailout review as IMF role still unclear

ATHENS, Greece (AP)—Greece's finance minister says his government is pressing lenders for a swift review of the country's bailout program, warning that delays would prolong market uncertainty and make fiscal targets more difficult. Euclid Tsakalotos said he wanted negotiations with bailout inspectors to last "weeks not months." He spoke Monday after returning from a six-city tour of European Union countries that included talks with German Finance Minister Wolfgang Schaeuble. Tsakalotos headed dramatic negotiations last year between Greece's left-wing government and rescue lenders for a third bailout that brought Greece to the brink of an exit from the euro currency. The International Monetary Fund has still not said whether it will continue as a full bailout partner, but Tsakalotos insisted Athens would welcome participation despite the IMF's "higher bar" on fiscal discipline.

WhatsApp to drop renewal fees for the messaging service

MENLO PARK, Calif. (AP)—WhatsApp, a popular mobile messaging service owned by Facebook, says it will drop its 99-cent subscription fee over the next several weeks. The company said Monday that charging the fee after one free year hasn't worked well. It says that many users don't have a credit or debit card and are afraid of losing the service when it's time to renew. WhatsApp says nearly a billion people around the world use the service. Company officials say they don't plan to introduce ads to offset the loss of fees. They say they will start testing tools this year to let customers communicate with banks and other businesses and organizations, but they aren't providing details. Facebook Inc. paid $22 billion to buy the messaging service in 2014.

E-Cigarette in luggage blamed for smoke, emergency landing

Hawaiian Airlines says an e-cigarette illegally put in a checked bag may have caused smoke and an emergency landing. The cargo-smoke indicator in the cockpit lit up during a flight from Honolulu to Maui on Tuesday, an airline spokesman said Friday. Alex Da Silva said the captain turned on the plane's fire-suppression system, declared an emergency and landed quickly at the Maui Airport. After the plane landed, fire crews found two pieces of checked luggage that seemed to have fire damage caused by an e-cigarette in one of the bags, he said. The Federal Aviation Administration bans electronic cigarettes from checked luggage, although they are allowed in carry-on bags. Da Silva said that Maui police were investigating. Police did not immediately answer requests for comment. ***(AP)***

STOCK PORTFOLIO

LEADING INDICATORS

DOW	S&P	NASDAQ
15,988.08	1,880.33	4,488.42
-390.97	-41.51	-126.59
-2.39%	-2.16%	-2.74%

EXCHANGE RATES

In U.S. dollar terms

Australian Dollar	1.4485	Hong Kong Dollar	7.8048	Philippine Peso	47.635
British Pound	0.701	Indian Rupee	67.56	Singapore Dollar	1.436
Canadian Dollar	1.4484	Indonesian Rupiah	13865	South Korean Won	1206.15
Chinese Yuan	6.5803	Japanese Yen	117.705	Swiss Franc	1.0074
Euro	0.9188	Malaysian Ringgit	4.3758	Taiwan Dollar	33.564
		New Zealand Dollar	1.5487	Thailand Baht	36.28

Nation

With Confederate flag gone, King Day rally shifts focus

COLUMBIA, S.C. (AP)—For the first time in 17 years, civil rights leaders gathered Monday at the South Carolina Statehouse to pay homage to the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. without the Confederate flag casting a long shadow over them.

The banner was taken down over the summer after police said a young white man who had posed for photos with a rebel flag shot nine black church members to death during a Bible study in Charleston. After the massacre at the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church, Republican Gov. Nikki Haley reversed course and made it a priority for lawmakers to pass legislation to remove the flag.

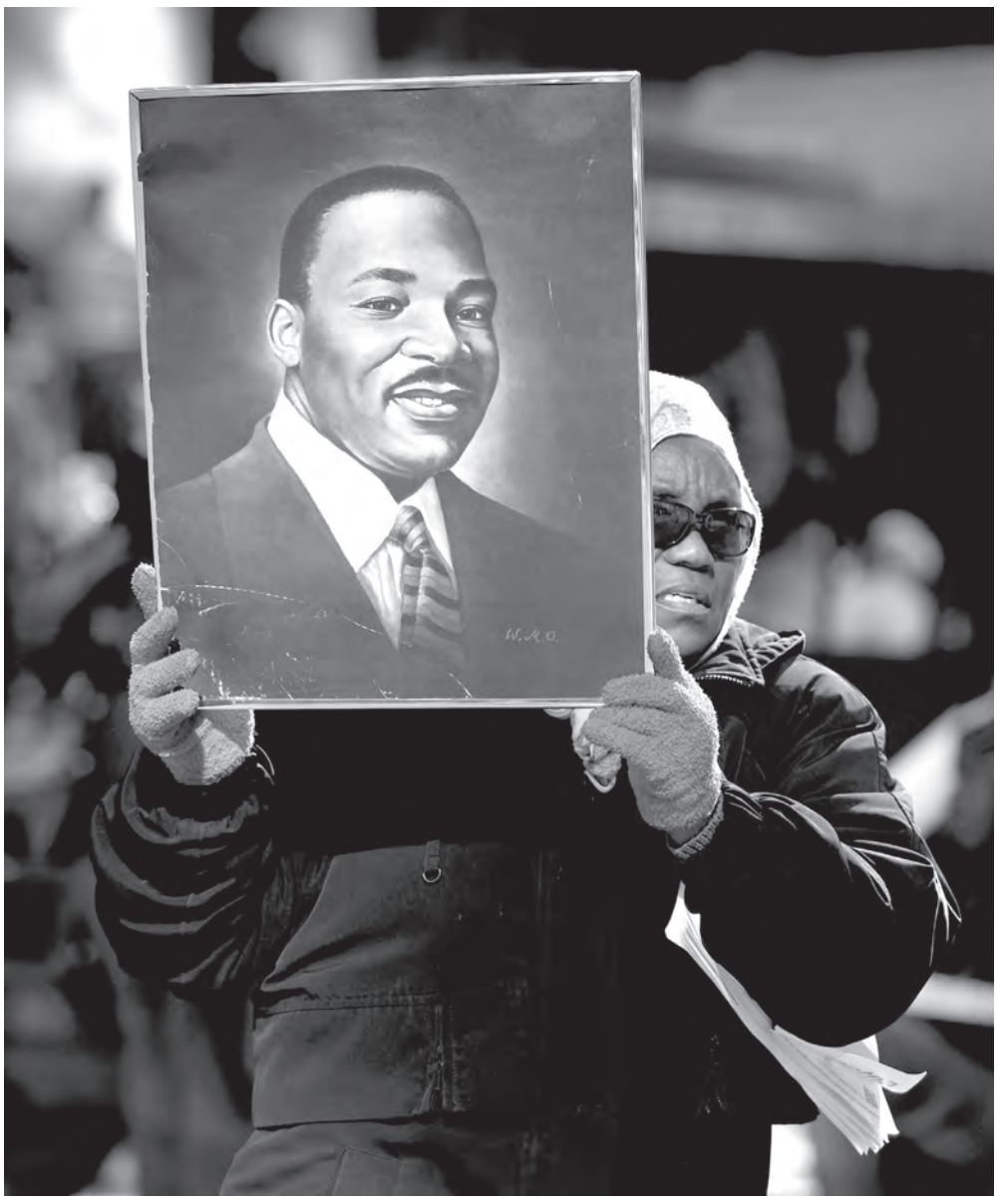
"Isn't this a great day? It's so nice to be standing here and not looking at that flag," said Ezell Pittman, who attended most of the King Day anti-flag rallies since they started in 2000. "I always had faith it would come down. I hate it took what it did, but was real happy to see it go."

Across the country, the 30th anniversary of the holiday to honor the civil rights leader assassinated in 1968 was remembered in different ways. In Michigan, people delivered bottled water to residents of Flint amid the city's drinking water crisis. In Atlanta, an overflow crowd listened as to the nation's housing secretary talk about the 50th anniversary of King's visit to Chicago to launch a campaign for fair housing. In Minnesota, a rally against police brutality briefly shut down traffic on a bridge that spans the Mississippi River.

South Carolina NAACP President Lonnie Randolph said the flag's removal was tangible evidence the state cares about civil rights when pushed hard enough. But he warned there would be other fights ahead.

"I promise you, the people that gather in this building—your building—will do something this year to cause us to return to ensure freedom, justice and equality is made possible for all people," Randolph said, motioning toward the capitol behind him.

Randolph promised to keep coming to the Statehouse until King's dream comes to its full meaning in a state with wide gaps in education achievement between school districts in rich, white communities and poorer, black ones, and where the governor and Republican-dominated Legislature have refused to take federal money to expand Medicaid.



AP

Kathy Williams walks the Martin Luther King, Jr. Day parade route with a portrait of the Civil Rights leader during the parade in Jacksonville, Fla., Monday, Jan. 18, 2016.

First lady, school meal directors may be headed for truce

WASHINGTON (AP)—A bipartisan Senate bill released Monday would revise healthier meal standards put into place over the last few years to give schools more flexibility in what they serve the nation's schoolchildren, easing requirements on whole grains and delaying an upcoming deadline to cut sodium levels on the lunch line.

While the legislation would placate some schools that have complained the rules are burdensome, it is greatly scaled back from an unsuccessful 2014 House Republican effort to allow schools to opt out of the rules entirely. The Senate Agriculture Committee is scheduled to vote on the measure on Wednesday.

After more than two years of public quarreling, the bill signals a possible truce for a group of school nutrition directors and first lady Michelle Obama, an outspoken proponent of healthier eating during her husband's seven years in office.

The School Nutrition Association, which represents school nutrition directors and companies that sell food to schools, said it is supportive of the legislation written by Senate Agriculture Chairman Pat Roberts, R-Kan., and the committee's top Democrat, Sen. Debbie Stabenow of Michigan.

"In the absence of increased funding, this agreement eases operational challenges and provides school meal programs critical flexibility to help them plan healthy school meals that appeal to students," the association's president, Jean Ronnei, said.

The White House has yet to weigh in, but committee aides said the administration was involved as they wrote the bill and is expected to be supportive. The aides declined to be identified because they were not authorized to speak publicly about the legislation.

Study: Man-made heat put in oceans has doubled since 1997

WASHINGTON (AP)—The amount of man-made heat energy absorbed by the seas has doubled since 1997, a study released Monday showed.

Scientists have long known that more than 90 percent of the heat energy from man-made global warming goes into the world's oceans instead of the ground. And they've seen ocean heat content rise in recent years. But the new study, using ocean-observing data that goes back to the British research ship Challenger in the 1870s and including high-tech modern underwater monitors and computer models, tracked how much man-made heat has been buried in the oceans in the past 150 years.

The world's oceans absorbed approximately 150 zettajoules of energy from 1865 to 1997, and then absorbed about another 150 in the next 18 years, according to a study published Monday in the journal Nature Climate Change.

To put that in perspective, if you exploded one atomic bomb the size of the one that dropped on Hiroshima every second for a year, the total energy released would be 2 zettajoules. So since 1997, Earth's oceans have absorbed man-made heat energy equivalent to a Hiroshima-style bomb being exploded every second for 75 straight years.

"The changes we're talking about, they are really, really big numbers," said study co-author Paul Durack, an oceanographer at the Lawrence Livermore National Lab in California. "They are nonhuman numbers."

Because there are decades when good data wasn't available and computer simulations are involved, the overall figures are rough but still are reliable, the study's authors said. Most of the added heat has been trapped in the upper 2,300 feet, but with every year the deeper oceans also are absorbing more energy, they said.

But the study's authors and outside experts say it's not the raw numbers that bother them. It's how fast those numbers are increasing.

ACROSS THE NATION

Family of American missing in Iran still waiting

NEW YORK (AP)—The relatives of a former FBI agent who disappeared in Iran almost nine years ago said Monday they're happy for the families of prisoners released from Iranian custody over the weekend but wished government officials had warned them he would not be among them. "We had to learn it from the TV ourselves, and that's very disappointing and heartbreaking," said Robert Levinson's wife, Christine. Robert Levinson disappeared from an Iranian resort on March 9, 2007, while in the country on an unauthorized mission for the CIA. It's unclear where he is; Iranian officials have said they don't know but Levinson's family does not believe them. His son, Dan Levinson, told The Associated Press that it felt like "once again, he's been left behind" and that the US can't give up on bringing his father back. Iran released four American prisoners over the weekend in exchange for the U.S. pardoning or dropping charges against seven Iranians. A fifth American was also released separately.

More quakes rattle Oklahoma but state avoids tough measures

OKLAHOMA CITY (AP)—In Oklahoma, now the country's earthquake capital, people are talking nervously about the big one as man-made quakes get stronger, more frequent and closer to major population centers. Next door in Kansas, they're feeling on firmer ground though no one is ready yet to declare victory. A year ago, the states had a common problem—earthquakes caused by the disposal of wastewater from oil and gas exploration. They chose different solutions. Kansas, following early scientific studies, decided to restrict how much and how fast the wastewater could be pumped back underground. Oklahoma instead initially concentrated on the depth of the wastewater injections. Developments since then haven't been reassuring in Oklahoma, where a quake knocked out power in parts of an Oklahoma City suburb several weeks ago and where fears are growing that the worst is yet to come. On Friday, about 200 unhappy residents packed a forum at the state capitol convened by critics of the state's response. A governor's task force is studying the problem but officials have so far avoided taking tougher measures.

Ex-girlfriend calls 911, warns police before officer's death

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP)—A woman whose ex-boyfriend is in custody suspected of killing a police officer called 911 before the officer's death to warn police in an Ohio village that they were in danger, according to the dispatch call. The body of Danville Officer Thomas Cottrell was found behind the village's municipal building late Sunday night, about 20 minutes after the ex-girlfriend of Herschel Ray Jones called police, Knox County Sheriff David Shaffer said. "Yes, I'm in danger," the woman told a dispatcher at 11:20 p.m. in a 911 call obtained Monday by The Columbus Dispatch. "But the cops in Danville are in danger, too. My ex-boyfriend's out in camo looking to kill a cop." The woman said Jones had already threated to kill her, and that he was armed. The sheriff said dispatchers tried to make contact with Cottrell after receiving the tip, but couldn't reach him. Deputies then searched the village, about 60 miles northeast of Columbus, and found Cottrell's body. His service weapon and cruiser were missing.

Asia

PH plane warned by 'Chinese navy' in disputed sea

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Philippine officials said Monday they received two intimidating radio warnings identified as from the Chinese navy when they flew a Cessna plane close to a Chinese-constructed island in the South China Sea.

Eric Apolonio said the incident happened Jan. 7 when he and other personnel of the Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines flew to a Philippine-occupied island for an engineering survey for the installation of civil aviation safety equipment on the island.

The island, which the Philippines calls Pag-asa and is home to a small fishing community and Filipino troops, is close to Subi Reef, one of seven reefs in the disputed Spratly archipelago which China has transformed into islands in the last two years using dredged sand.

Chinese officials say they have completed the island building and are now constructing buildings and runways to ensure safe civilian sea travel. They have acknowledged, though, that the islands could also be used militarily, adding that they have the right to build on what they say is Chinese territory.

The United States and governments with rival claims with China in the disputed region, including the Philippines and Vietnam, have expressed alarm over the Chinese construction, saying it raises tensions and threatens regional stability and could violate freedom of navigation and overflight.

As their Cessna approached Pag-asa to land, Apolonio said a message was received over an emergency radio channel warning: "Foreign military aircraft, this is the Chinese navy. You are threatening the security of our station."

The Filipino pilots ignored the warning and continued with the trip since they were flying a civilian plane over what Apolonio said was Philippine territory. After finishing the survey on Pag-asa, known internationally as Thitu island, they left in the plane and later received the same warning message, he said.

AP

In this Wednesday, Jan. 6, 2016 photo released by China's Xinhua News Agency, people pose for a group photo together after landing at the airfield on the Spratly Islands, also known as Nansha Islands in Chinese, of the South China Sea.

Asked if they felt threatened, Apolonio said they were apprehensive because "you'll never know, we can be fired upon."

The Chinese Embassy in Manila did not immediately reply when asked for comment.

Mayor Eugenio Bito-onon, the leader of the community on Pag-asa who flew with Apolonio's team, said the radio warnings were an act of intimidation and illustrated the threat to freedom of flight in the region. He said other civilian and military planes have also been shooed away by the Chinese in the region.

Despite the incident, Apolonio said the government will proceed with plans to install the aviation equipment, which is required by the International Civil Aviation Organization to help ensure the safety of commercial flights. Called the Automatic Dependent Surveillance Broadcast, the equipment helps aircraft determine their positions via satellite navigation and enables them to be tracked.

British Ambassador to Manila Asif Ahmad said Monday that his government would oppose any move that restricts freedom of navigation and overflight in the disputed waters.

"If a British aircraft, civilian or military, was intercepted and not allowed to fly over a space which we regard as international, we will simply ignore it," he told reporters.

Pakistan urges for a Saudi-Iran line of communication

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia (AP)—A top-level delegation from Pakistan visiting Saudi Arabia on Monday called for the opening of a communication line between the kingdom and its rival Iran, Pakistani officials said.

The visit comes as Pakistan is trying to mediate in the ongoing dispute between Riyadh and Tehran.

Pakistan's Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, accompanied by army chief Gen. Raheel Sharif, held talks with Saudi King Salman in Riyadh where they discussed "bilateral cooperation and the latest regional developments," according to the official Saudi Press Agency.

The Pakistani prime minister, general and the foreign affairs minister attended a luncheon hosted by the Saudi king, which was also attended by the Saudi deputy crown prince who is also defense minister, as well as the ministers of finance and foreign affairs.

The Pakistani officials are heading next to Tehran on Tuesday to meet Iran's President Hassan Rouhani.

Sharif, the army chief, stressed the need for opening up communication channels between the two countries, according to a government and a security official who attended the meeting. The two spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the meeting with the media.

Pakistan's Foreign Ministry says that Islamabad is deeply concerned at the recent escalation of tensions between Saudi Arabia and Iran. The Sunni and Shiite powerhouses have been rivals for years but the current tensions worsened after Saudi Arabia executed a prominent Saudi Shiite cleric who was an outspoken opposition figure on Jan. 2. Angry crowds in Iran stormed the Saudi embassy, and Riyadh severed diplomatic relations with Tehran in protest.

ASIAN BRIEFS

The world's oldest man, a Japanese, dies at age 112

TOKYO (AP)—The world's oldest man, a Japanese, has died at the age of 112, two months short of his 113th birthday. Yasutaro Koide was born on March 13, 1903, and said his secret to a long life was not to overdo it, or drink or smoke. A native of Nagoya, Koide (pronounced "Koy-deh") worked as a tailor when he was younger. He became the world's oldest man in August. The Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare said he died early Tuesday. In Japan, 111-year-old Tokyo native Masamitsu Yoshida, born on May 30, 1904, succeeds Koide as the oldest man. It was not immediately known whether Yoshida is also the world's oldest male. The world's oldest person is an American woman, 116-year-old Susannah Mushatt Jones of Brooklyn, New York.

Pakistan's ex-President Musharraf acquitted in murder case

QUETTA, Pakistan (AP)—A court acquitted former Pakistani president Pervez Musharraf Monday in a murder case involving the killing of a separatist leader, Akbar Bugti, who had died in a 2006 military operation in Baluchistan province, lawyers said. An anti-terrorism court announced the verdict in the southwestern city of Quetta, Baluchistan's provincial capital. The court accepted the defense's argument that Musharraf had nothing to do with the killing, said his lawyer Akhtar Shah. He added that he had been pleading his client's innocence ever since the case was registered in 2009. Musharraf's government in mid-2000s launched a crackdown on separatist insurgents in Baluchistan province and Bugti was killed in a raid in 2006. Separatists in the province want complete autonomy from Islamabad and have been fighting for a greater share of revenue from their region's natural resources.

China confirms missing Hong Kong publisher in mainland

HONG KONG (AP)—Hong Kong authorities say they have received confirmation from Chinese security officials that a bookseller whose disappearance three weeks ago raised international concern is in the mainland. Hong Kong police said late Monday that they received notice from Guangdong province's public security department that Lee Bo was "understood" to be in mainland China. Guangdong officials were replying to a request by Hong Kong police for information on Lee. He and four other people linked to a Hong Kong publishing company and its bookshop had gone missing in recent months. The publishing firm specialized in books banned in mainland China for being critical of its communist leadership. Lee's case in particular raised alarm bells because it raised suspicions that Chinese security agents crossed into Hong Kong to abduct him.

Rescuing Borneo's threatened orangutans

SUNGAI MANGKUTUB, Indonesia (AP)—In a dense strip of peat swamp jungle along the banks of Mangkutub River in the heart of Borneo, a conservationist aims his tranquilizer rifle at an orangutan high in a tree and fires two darts.

The giant, red-haired primate slides down the tree on its own and soon loses consciousness on the jungle floor.

A team of ten rescuers from the Borneo Orangutan Survival Foundation huddle around the adult male and perform a brief medical examination—checking temperature, teeth to determine rough age, taking a blood sample and inserting a chip under its skin—before preparing to transport the orangutan to a release site about 80 kilometers away, where they believe it will have more space to roam and be less threatened by forest fires.

Forest fires, often set illegally to clear land, have been an annual problem in Indonesia since the mid-1990s, but last year's was the worst in nearly 20 years, when blazes spread across 2.1 million hectares (8,063 square miles). They killed 21 people, damaged crops and caused respiratory problems for more than half a million.

The fires also encroached on the habitat of orangutans in central Borneo, forcing them to move closer to river banks, in some places along a strip of forest as narrow as 30 meters (yards) near the Mangkutab River. The population of the big apes got so crowded that experts worried they would starve and get into conflicts with people living nearby.

"Recent forest fires have made it difficult for orangutans to find food and this is very dangerous for them," said Ahmad Sayoko, coordinator of rescue and release mission.

Most rescued orangutans were found in bad condition, apparently starving and some with cataracts. One had multiple air rifle pellets in its head and leg, a sign of conflict with humans.

Southeast Asia's Sumatra and Borneo islands are the orangutans' last homes on Earth, and environmentalists warn that the estimated 60,000 animals remaining could disappear from the wild within the next decade if steps aren't taken to protect them. Wild orangutans are also threatened by poaching and illegal logging.

"We have to rescue and relocate them as soon as possible or they could lose their lives," said Kissar Odom, who works for the foundation. During the team's first operation in November, they rescued and relocated 39 orangutans, he said.

On this, the team's second operation, rescuers have spotted an orangutan nearly every ten minutes as they ride along in the boat, a sign that the area along the river has a higher population density than is healthy.

Team members carried the large tranquilized orangutan through a dense swamp and put it in a cage, which was then loaded on a waiting boat to be taken to the release site.

World

Assad's battlefield gains cast cloud on upcoming talks

BEIRUT (AP)—Syrian peace talks due next week are looking increasingly moot as a string of recent battlefield victories by government troops have bolstered President Bashar Assad's hand and plunged the rebels into disarray.

The government's advances add to the obstacles that have scuttled chances of halting—at least anytime soon—the five-year civil war that has killed a quarter of a million people, displaced half the country and enabled the radical Islamic State group to seize a third of Syria's territory.

A proxy war on the ground between regional rivals Iran and Saudi Arabia, disorganization among the rebels after a top commander and several other local leaders were killed, rigid and disparate U.S. and Russian positions regarding Assad's future, and a spat over which groups will be invited to the negotiating table have all added to the conflagration.

AP

This Tuesday, Jan 12, 2016, file photo released by the Syrian official news agency SANA, shows Syrian government troops and allied militiamen walk inside the key town of Salma in Latakia province, Syria.

"I don't think we should expect any major results," said Fawaz Gerges, professor of Middle Eastern politics at the London School of Economics. "Assad really believes that time is on his side, that he is winning, that the opposition is in tatters."

The Jan. 25 talks in Geneva are meant to start a political process to end the conflict that started in 2011 as a largely peaceful uprising against Assad's rule but escalated into an all-out war after a harsh state crackdown. The plan calls for cease-fires in parallel to the talks, a new constitution and elections in a year and a half.

The fighting has intensified since Russia intervened militarily with airstrikes last September, ostensibly to target Islamic State militants and other extremists. But the airstrikes helped Assad push back rebels on several fronts and capture dozens of villages in the north and west.

In November, government troops broke a three-year siege of the Kweiras air base in the northern province of Aleppo, and in December they captured another air base, Marj al-Sultan, in an opposition stronghold near the capital, Damascus. Allied fighters from the Lebanon's Shiite Hezbollah group, as well as Iranian military advisers and pro-government militias, have helped the army take several areas in and around Latakia province, the heartland of Assad's minority Alawite sect, which dominates the military and government.

The latest victory came last week with the capture of the town of Salma, one of the most significant government advances since the Russian air campaign began. Overlooking the coast, it is only 12 kilometers (seven miles) from the border with Turkey, a key supporter of rebels in the area.

"The Syrian army has shifted from a defensive mode to offense," said Gerges. "Before the Russian intervention the army was bleeding, it was desperately trying to maintain its position, but now it has achieved major tactical gains on many fronts."

This does not bode well for the Geneva talks, as neither side will be interested in making compromises while the front lines are in a state of flux, Gerges added.

Analysis: Iran deals may not herald rapid changes

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP)—The lifting of crippling international sanctions linked to Iran's nuclear program and the flurry of diplomacy that led to the release of Americans held by Tehran suggests a new era could be dawning. But anyone hoping for rapid change is likely to be disappointed.

President Hassan Rouhani and his team have plenty to celebrate now that nuclear sanctions have been removed. The moderate leader promised to boost Iran's struggling economy and improve its relations with the wider world during his 2013 campaign. The nuclear deal achieves both aims.

He hailed the deal Sunday as a way to open "new windows for engagement with the world," and said fresh investments and newly freed overseas assets could kick-start the transformation of a country struggling with high unemployment and inflation. At the top of the shopping list are more than 100 planes from Europe's Airbus.

It will take time for the economic benefits to trickle down to ordinary Iranians, but the goodwill from the deal could translate into electoral gains for moderate and reformist candidates in parliamentary elections late next month. Voters will also select members of the 88-seat Experts Assembly, an influential clerical body that picks a successor for the 76-year-old supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, in the event of his death.

Rouhani may have pushed for the rapid implementation of Iran's commitments under last summer's nuclear deal, ensuring faster sanctions relief, with the electoral timetable in mind.

But he still faces intense domestic opposition from hard-liners who believe he has given away too much and fear Iran's opening to the outside world leaves it exposed to corrupting foreign cultural influences.

In the months leading up this past weekend's implementation of the nuclear deal, Iranian authorities pursued a renewed crackdown on free expression, jailing several writers and artists, including award-winning filmmaker Keywan Karimi.

The November anniversary of the 1979 takeover of the U.S. Embassy in Tehran drew thousands of demonstrators, who burned American flags and hoisted signs denouncing McDonald's and Starbucks.

Burkina Faso capital security tightens after jihadi attack

OUAGADOUGOU, Burkina Faso (AP)—In the wake of a weekend attack that killed at least 29 people, security was beefed up across Burkina Faso's capital Monday as businesses and banks reopened.

The West African nation also announced a joint effort with neighboring Mali in the fight against Islamic extremists in the West African region.

"Please go ahead and search my bag. We want to be protected and there is no way to refuse this," said Fati Doussa, to security guards as he visited a bank to get some cash. Metal detectors have been placed at banks.

"We know it is just going to be different from now on," said Ousmane Sawadogo, a cell-phone seller some 200 meters (218 yards) from the Splendid Hotel which was attacked Friday night.

The attack was the first of its kind in Burkina Faso, a largely Muslim country that had managed to avoid the kinds of jihadi attacks that have hit neighboring Mali since 2012.

At the site Monday, forensic experts and investigators from France and Burkina Faso, dressed in white, filled the brown dusty street, gathering evidence in secured areas near the hotel and the Cappuccino Cafe.

Military forces ended the siege Saturday.

Burkina Faso's security minister, Simon Compaore, said Sunday 32 people were dead, including three jihadis.

French Ambassador Gilles Thibault said Monday that about 30 people were dead in addition to the three attackers who were killed by French forces. Thirty others were still hospitalized, and about 180 had been freed by French and Burkina Faso forces during and after the siege, he said.

"We were awaiting an attack like this one," he said. "It's impossible to say if these types of operations will be limited to just this one."

Officials Saturday said forces killed three attackers in the Splendid Hotel and another in a neighboring hotel.

Military spokesman Capt. Guy Herve Ye on Monday said, however, that they have clearly identified three attackers and are investigating what they thought was a fourth. He said that many witnesses said that there were women among the attackers, though he says that is probably because the attackers had long dreadlocks.

Two former Olympic officials, Jean-Noel Rey from Switzerland and Jean-Pascal

Abduction of Americans in Iraq raises fears about security

BAGHDAD (AP)—The abduction of three Americans from a Baghdad apartment over the weekend is the latest in a series of brazen high-profile kidnappings undermining confidence in the Iraqi government's ability to control state-sanctioned Shiite militias that have grown in strength as Iraqi security forces battle the Islamic State group.

Witnesses said men in uniform carried out the kidnapping in broad daylight Saturday, 100 yards (meters) from a police station.

"Gunmen in military uniforms came in five or six SUVs, they entered the building and then left almost immediately," said Mohammad Jabar, 35, who runs a shop down the street from the three-story apartment building where the Americans had been invited by their Iraqi interpreter.

"A few hours later we heard that three foreigners had been kidnapped by these gunmen," Jaber said.

The three were abducted in Dora, a mixed neighborhood that is home to both Shiites and Sunnis. However, they were then taken to Sadr City, a vast and densely populated Shiite district to the east, and there "all communication ceased," an Iraqi intelligence official told The Associated Press. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak to reporters.

A similar scene unfolded in September, when masked men in military uniforms abducted 18 Turkish workers from a construction site in a Shiite neighborhood. A hostage video later showed the men standing before a banner that read "Death Squads" and "Oh, Hussein," a Shiite religious slogan. The workers were released later that month.

In December, gunmen driving SUVs raided a remote camp for falconry hunting in Iraq's overwhelmingly Shiite south, kidnapping 26 Qataris, who are still being held. Iraq's Interior Ministry said at the time that the abduction was "to achieve political and media goals," without providing further details.

Baghdad authorities said in a statement that the three Americans were kidnapped from a "suspicious apartment" without elaborating, and have provided no other details.

The U.S. Embassy confirmed Sunday that "several" Americans went missing in Iraq, after local media reported that three Americans had been kidnapped in the Iraqi capital. U.S. officials have declined to provide further details, and have neither identified the Americans nor said what they were doing in Iraq.

Focus

Dubai tower blaze shows risks in common building material

By ADAM SCHRECK and JON GAMBRELL
ASSOCIATED PRESS

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP)—Within minutes, the revelry of New Year's Eve in Dubai turned to horror as those gathered for fireworks downtown watched flames race up the side of one of the glistening city's most prominent luxury hotels.

But the fire at the 63-story The Address Downtown Dubai wasn't the first, second or even third blaze to spread swiftly along the exterior of skyscrapers that have risen from the desert at a torrid pace in and around Dubai over the past two decades.

It was at least the eighth such fire in the Emirates alone, and similar blazes have struck major cities across the world, killing dozens of people, according to an Associated Press survey.

The reason, building and safety experts say, is the material used for the buildings' sidings, called aluminum composite panel cladding. While types of cladding can be made with fire-resistant material, experts say those that have caught fire in Dubai and elsewhere weren't designed to meet stricter safety standards and often were put onto buildings without any breaks to slow or halt a possible blaze.

While new regulations are now in place for construction in Dubai and other cities, experts acknowledge they have no idea how many skyscrapers have the potentially combustible paneling and are at risk of similar fast-moving fires.

"It's like a wildfire going up the sides of the building," said Thom Bohlen, chief technical officer at the Middle East Center for Sustainable Development in Dubai. "It's very difficult to control and it's very fast. It happens extremely fast."

Cladding came into vogue over a decade ago, as Dubai's building boom was well underway. Developers use it because it offers a modern finish to buildings, allows dust to wash off during rains, and is relatively simple and cheap to install.

Dubai has since burgeoned into a cosmopolitan business hub of more than 2 million people. As in other Emirati cities, foreign residents far outnumber the local population. Expatriate professionals in particular are drawn to the ear-popping apartments the city's hundreds of high-rises offer, and skyscraper hotels accommodate millions of guests each year. The city-state aims to attract 20 million visitors annually by the time it hosts the World Expo in 2020.

That means the risk of high-rise fires touches people from all over the world.

Typically, the cladding is a half-millimeter (0.02-inch) thick piece of aluminum attached to a foam core that is sandwiched to another similar skin. The panels are then affixed to the side of a building, one piece after another.

The biggest problem lies with panel cores that are all or mostly polyethylene, a common type of plastic, said Andy Dean, the Mideast head of facades at the engineering consultancy WSP Global.

AP
In this Sunday, Jan. 10, 2016 photo, the burned hulk of The Address Downtown is seen in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. Skyscraper fires like the blaze that struck the 63-story luxury hotel in Dubai on New Year's Eve, 2016, swiftly turning it into a towering inferno, are not that rare. The fire in Dubai has raised new issues about the safety of exterior sidings put on high-rise buildings in the United Arab Emirates and around the world.

"The ones with 100-percent polyethylene core can burn quiet readily," Dean said. "Some of the older, even fire-rated materials, still have quite a lot of polymer in them."

The panels themselves don't spark the fires, and the risks can be lessened if they are installed with breaks between them to curb a fire's spread. The panels' flammability can be significantly reduced by replacing some of the plastic inside the panels with material that doesn't burn so easily.

However, when installed uninterrupted row after row, more flammable types of cladding provide a straight line of kindling up the side of a tower.

That was the case in 2012 when a spate of fires struck Dubai and the neighboring emirate of Sharjah. Blaze after blaze, though some ignited differently, behaved the same way: fire rushed up and down the sides of the buildings, fueled by the external panels.

The day after an April 2012 fire at a 40-story building in Sharjah, Dubai issued new building regulations barring the use of cladding constructed with flammable material. Officials elsewhere in the United Arab Emirates followed suit, though by that time, the building boom had subsided in the wake of a global recession.

But the rules did not call for retrofitting buildings with flammable cladding already installed—nor is there any clear idea of how many of these buildings stand in Dubai or the UAE's other six emirates.

Local experts have suggested as many as 70 percent of the towers in the Dubai may contain the material, though they acknowledge the figure is only an estimate as there are apparently no official records.

"There's an exposure because there's a lot of them and unfortunately they don't come with an 'X' on the building to know which ones they are," said Sami Sayegh, global property executive in the Middle East and North Africa for insurance giant American International Group, Inc.

Emaar Properties, which developed The Address Downtown and nearby properties including the Burj Khalifa, the world's tallest building, said authorities are still investigating the New Year's Eve fire. It has hired an outside contractor to assess and restore the damaged tower, and it plans to reopen the hotel, based on orders from Dubai's ruler himself. It has not released specific details about the type of cladding used.

However, The National, a state-owned newspaper in Abu Dhabi, has reported that the cladding used on The Address Downtown was the fire-prone type seen in other blazes.

Lt. Col. Jamal Ahmed Ibrahim, director of preventive safety for Dubai Civil Defense, said authorities take the issue of cladding fires seriously and are committed to "finding solutions and stopping these accidents from happening."

A nationwide survey of existing buildings has been ordered in the wake of The Address fire, and additional guidelines will be put in place in March to ensure new buildings are constructed to a higher standard, he said.

However, Ibrahim insisted that the type of cladding that was involved in previous tower fires appears to have been used on only a small number of all buildings in the emirate - a figure he suggested could be as little as 5 percent. But he acknowledged that officials don't know how many buildings are at risk.

"Without (doing) the survey or something, we can't say the number exactly," he said.

The problem is not Dubai's alone—cladding fires have struck elsewhere in the world.

In 2010, a similar fire at a Shanghai high-rise killed at least 58 people. An apartment fire in May in Azerbaijan's capital, Baku, killed 16. Another dramatic blaze hit Beijing's TV Cultural Center in February 2009, killing a firefighter.

All bore similarities to the Dubai fires, with flames racing up the sides of the building, and experts attributed each fire's speed to the cladding.

Peter Rau, the chief officer of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade in Melbourne, Australia, knows firsthand how dangerous such fires can be. In November 2014, a fire erupted at a 23-story apartment building in Melbourne and raced up more than 20 stories in just six minutes as flaming debris rained down below. While no one was injured, the fast-moving blaze did millions of dollars' worth of damage to the building.

In the aftermath of the blaze, fire officials discovered some 50 other buildings in the city—and 1,700 in the surrounding state of Victoria - had similar, flammable siding, Rau said.

"You know you've only got to step back a little bit further and say: 'What does it mean for Australia and what does it mean (when) you're talking to me from Dubai?'" Rau said. "This is a significant issue worldwide, I would suggest... There is no question this is a game changer."

Good Housekeeping

Diggin' In: Meet three master naturalists geeked about nature

By KATHY VAN MULLEKOM
DAILY PRESS

Master naturalists are curious about nature, live for the outdoors and care about natural resource management and conservation efforts.

Similar in concept to the nationwide master gardener training sponsored by state universities and cooperative extension services, master naturalists walk a different path — studying geology, meteorology, climate and citizen science, as well as native trees and biology of plants, birds, fish, mammals, reptiles and insects. However, just like master gardeners, they train for several months, and then volunteer in the community through stewardship, citizen science and educational programs.

"I joined so I could find the rest of the 'nature geeks' out there because I knew there had to be more like me in such an organization," says Elisabeth Wilkins of Yorktown, Va., one of 95 members in the Peninsula Chapter, Virginia Master Naturalists.

As volunteers, the master naturalists help design and plant pollinator habitats at schools, establish wildlife covers along public corridors, install living shorelines, clear and mark nature trails, participate in water cleanups, monitor water quality, count birds, study wetlands and map wildlife, just to name a few of their annual projects.

In Virginia, the statewide program — www.virginiamasternaturalist.org — began in 2006. Today there are more than 30 chapters under the statewide program sponsored by Virginia Cooperative Extension, Department of Forestry, Department of Conservation and Recreation, Department of Game & Inland Fisheries, Department of Environmental Quality, Virginia Museum of Natural History and Virginia Institute of Marine Science's Center for Coastal Resources Management.

Nationwide, the Alliance of Natural Resource Outreach and Service Programs — http://anrosp.org — links wanna-be naturalists to natural resources programs.

MCT

Master Naturalist Larry Lewis volunteers in gardens at the Virginia Living Museum near his home in Newport News, Va.

MCT

Laura Marlowe helps clear and mulch a nature trail at Endview Plantation in upper Newport News, Va

MCT

Elisabeth Wilkins examines mushrooms during a scouting walk at Woodville Park in Gloucester County, Va.

Meet three master naturalists

Larry Lewis, 68, of Newport News, Va. After retiring in 2010, I trained as a master gardener. During my first year as a master gardener, a now great friend gave me a copy of Tallamy's "Bringing Nature Home." She encouraged me to train as a master naturalist and introduced me to horticulture at the Virginia Living Museum – www.thevlm.org — near me. Tallamy's book changed my gardening focus forever. After reading Tallamy's book, my style shifted to pleasing not only the gardener's eye, but planting to encourage birds and pollinators. Unnaturally green lawn and pleasing formal design are no longer a goal. Planting for nature can mean your garden can look a little wild during parts of the year. And limited use of herbicides and no pesticides are the new rule. I see a bug bite as proof the plant has a purpose in the garden.

Laura Marlowe, 63, of Poquoson, Va. After retiring from a 30-year Navy career, followed by a few years working for a defense contractor, I became a master naturalist in spring 2014 because I was interested in conservation and the environment. It was one of the best decisions I ever made. Then, I discovered my interest in trees, and wanted to learn to identify them and their role in the environment, so I took master gardener training that following fall. After that, I took tree steward training and still love learning about trees. I love being surrounded by trees, and think that a home that looks like it was planted in the woods is the most inviting, and provides wonderful habitat for birds and small animals. It is really exciting to me to find box turtles in my yard and recognize them from previous years, or see cardinals nesting in the shrubs by my house.

Elisabeth Wilkins, 46, of Yorktown. After 15 years as an environmental educator in New York City, I am a very enthusiastic environmental educator and mentor. I love to share what I know and dispel "nature myths," and was awarded the Virginia Master Naturalist of the Year in 2014. My favorite master naturalist project is the eMammal cameras project, overseen by the Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute. It captures images of what's out in the woods when the humans are not — the heat-and motion-sensing cameras provide more of an instant gratification, because every three to four weeks we get to see new pictures of what animals were visiting our sites. We recently got a gorgeous up-close picture of a coyote in Newport News. Another great part of the eMammal project is the diverse group of stalwart volunteer hikers who put the cameras out…we have a jolly time hiking out to the sites, looking at nature together along the way, trying not to get lost while off-trail.

LIVING SMART: 5 healthy home habits to start in 2016

By OSEYE BOYD
ANGIE'S LIST

It's the time of year when we're inundated with articles on how to be healthy, start good-for-you habits and dump the bad ones. But, what about giving some attention to another major investment in your life — your home.

To help get your home in tip-top shape, here are five healthy home habits to start in the upcoming year:

1. Create a home maintenance and repair budget

Don't break the bank when your washing machine stops or the hot water heater leaks. Create a budget now for expected maintenance projects, and set aside extra funds for those unexpected, emergency repairs that always seem to occur at the most inopportune time. According to financial pros, you can expect to spend about one to four percent of your home's value annually on repairs and maintenance.

2. Clean refrigerator condenser coils

Help your refrigerator live longer and stay cool by cleaning the condenser coils. Appliance repair pros say it's the No. 1 refrigerator maintenance task. Condenser coils, which are located under or behind the refrigerator, eventually become covered with dust and pet hair. Keeping the condenser coils clean can save up to 10 percent on your energy bill. A professional cleaning costs around $100. However, you can do it yourself with a vacuum cleaner and an inexpensive coil brush.

3. Service your garage door

Regular garage door maintenance ensures safety and helps prevent costly repairs. In many houses, the garage door is the most used door — and it's a big, heavy one. Hire a garage door pro to check the tracks, rollers and hinges; tighten screws and bolts and lubricate the moving parts. According to professionals and Angie List members, garage door inspections cost $40 to $100.

4. Hire a chimney sweep

Regardless of whether you use a wood-burning fireplace or a gas log fireplace. A gas fireplace burns clean, meaning there's no creosote or soot, but you want to be sure the ceramic logs, valves and connections work properly. A gas log fireplace poses the risk of carbon dioxide poisoning if not properly ventilated.

For wood-burning fireplaces, highly flammable creosote builds up in the chimney walls and can cause a fire if not removed. The National Fire Protection Agency (NFPA) advises hiring a Chimney Safety Institute of America (CSIA) Certified Chimney Sweep.

Also, inspect the chimney for debris, such as bird nests or other objects that could block ventilation.

5. Schedule a furnace tune-up

Annual furnace inspections and cleanings cost less than $100, but can potentially save you hundreds of dollars in repairs by keeping your HVAC system in optimal working condition and catching problems early. HVAC maintenance contracts typically cost $150 to $500 per year. Don't forget to change the furnace filter as a clogged air filter puts extra stress on your HVAC system.

Oseye Boyd is a reporter at Angie's List

Life & Style

Eagles co-founder Glenn Frey, who sang 'Take It Easy,' dies

NEW YORK (AP)—Glenn Frey, a rock 'n' roll rebel from Detroit who journeyed West, co-founded the Eagles and with Don Henley became one of history's most successful songwriting teams with such hits as "Hotel California" and "Life in the Fast Lane," has died.

Frey, 67, died of complications from rheumatoid arthritis, acute ulcerative colitis and pneumonia, the band said on its website. He died on Monday in New York. He had fought the ailments for the past several weeks, the band said.

"The Frey family would like to thank everyone who joined Glenn to fight this fight and hoped and prayed for his recovery," a statement on the band's website said. "Words can neither describe our sorrow, nor our love and respect for all that he has given to us, his family, the music community & millions of fans worldwide."

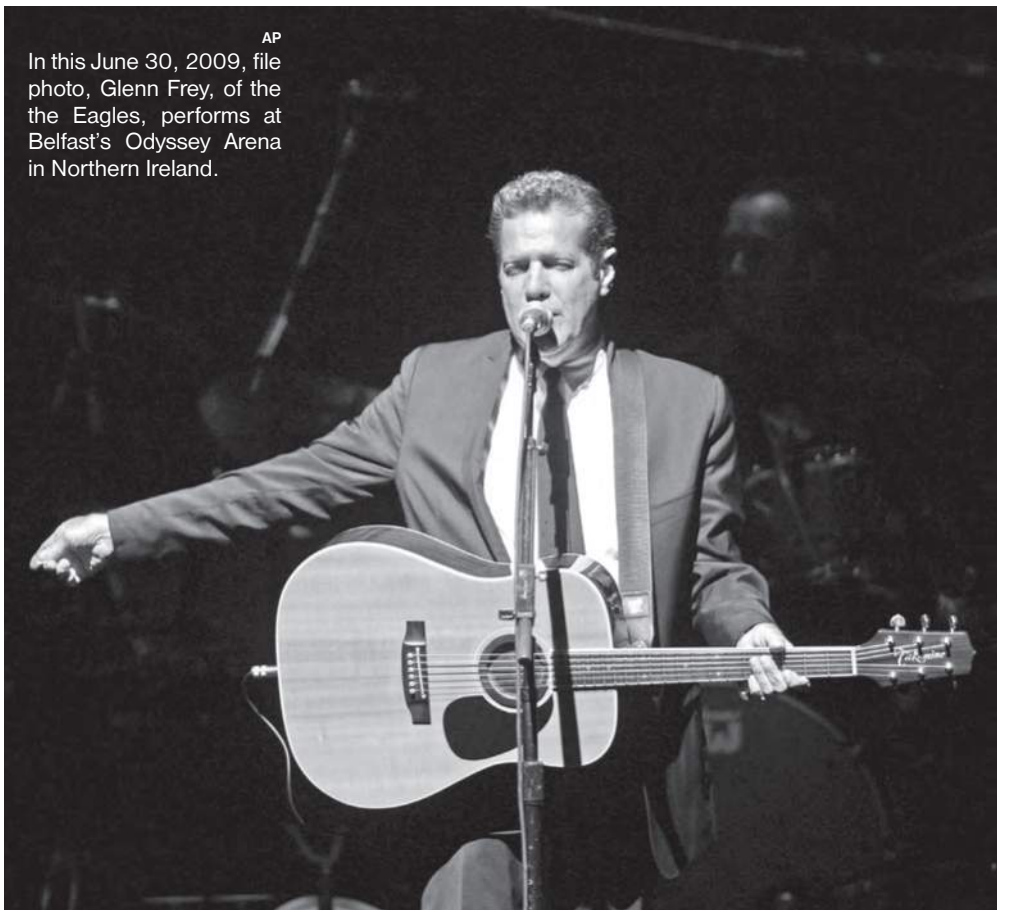
Guitarist Frey and drummer Henley formed the Eagles in Los Angeles in the early 1970s, along with guitarist Bernie Leadon and bassist Randy Meisner. Their popularity grew through much of the decade, and they embodied for many listeners the melodic Los Angeles sound despite having no native Californians in the group. Critics often dismissed them as slick and unadventurous, but their blend of mellow ballads and macho rockers, and of pop and folk and country, gave them unusually broad appeal.

An Eagles greatest-hits collection from the mid-1970s and "Hotel California," released in 1976, both have sold more than 20 million copies and are among the best-selling albums of modern times. Their many hit singles included "The Best of My Love," ''Desperado," ''One of These Nights" and "The Long Run," a prophetic boast from 1979 that they would "go the distance" in the long run." The impulsive Frey and more cerebral Henley shared songwriting and singing duties, with Frey's drawling tenor featured on "Heartache Tonight," ''Already Gone" and the group's breakthrough hit, "Take it Easy."

Their popularity well outlasted their breakup in 1980 and the 14-year hiatus that followed. Their records remained consistent sellers, and they were a top touring act over the last 20 years even though Frey and Henley were the only remaining original members. They were joined on stage by guitarist Joe Walsh, who replaced Leadon in the mid-1970s, and bassist Timothy B. Schmit, who stepped in after Meisner quit in 1977. Guitarist Don Felder was added in 1974 but parted ways with the band in 2001 amid disputes over money. The band was inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame in 1998 and was supposed to have been honored at the Kennedy Center last month, but the appearance was postponed because of Frey's health problems.

Frey had occasional success as a solo artist, with songs including "The One You Love" and "You Belong to the City," and he had careers in movies and television. He appeared on episodes of "Miami Vice" and "Nash Bridges," both featuring his friend Don Johnson, and appeared in the film "Jerry McGuire," directed by Cameron Crowe, who had befriended him after he interviewed the Eagles for Rolling Stone magazine in the 1970s. Frey's "The Heat Is On" was a hit from the "Beverly Hills Cop" soundtrack, and his "Smuggler's Blues" inspired a "Miami Vice" episode of the same name.

Frey, known for his oversized jaw, big grin and wavy dark hair, loved music, girls and the rock 'n' roll life. He would meet up with Henley, Meisner and Leadon while all were trying to catch on in the Los Angeles music scene, and for a time the four backed Linda Ronstadt.



AP

In this June 30, 2009, file photo, Glenn Frey, of the the Eagles, performs at Belfast's Odyssey Arena in Northern Ireland.

Musicians, other celebs react to death of Glenn Frey

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Musicians and other celebrities react to the death Monday of Eagles co-founder Glenn Frey:

■ "I'm not sure I believe in fate, but I know that crossing paths with Glenn Lewis Frey in 1970 changed my life forever, and it eventually had an impact on the lives of millions of other people all over the planet. It will be very strange going forward in a world without him in it. But, I will be grateful, every day, that he was in my life. Rest in peace, my brother. You did what you set out to do, and then some."—Don Henley in a statement.

■ "Shocker. My friend from the early days, and important member of Eagles, has died. We loved you, Glenn Frey."—**Steve Martin** on Twitter.

■ "One of Lady A's biggest influences has always been The Eagles. Heartbroken to hear we lost another great music icon. #rip #glennfrey"—**Hillary Scott** of Lady Antebellum on Twitter.

■ "Glenn Frey and the music he created alone and with The Eagles have been such an inspiration to me. We first met at the video shoot for my version of 'Take It Easy' in 1993. He always went out of his way to acknowledge and encourage me ever since. I'm a better person, better musician and a better songwriter having met him. I still can't believe he is gone!"—**Travis Tritt** in a statement.

■ "sigh Glenn Frey belongs to the city still. damn man. all these legends man.....#TheEagles"—**Questlove** on Twitter.

■ "RIP, Glenn Frey. Travel to the stars safely, bro."—Ryan Adams on Twitter.

■ "SHOCKED to report the death of GLENN FREY. Eagle & brilliant songwriter. We shared some memories at RRHOF. Shocked."—**Paul Stanley** of KISS on Twitter.

■ "His music was personally inspirational, his impact immeasurable, his legacy timeless. #glennfrey #heartachetonight"—**Tim McGraw** on Twitter.

■ "Glenn Frey was an integral part of one of the most storied bands in pop history. His songwriting, especially with bandmate Don Henley, resulted in some of the biggest hits and standards of the '70s... Glenn's untimely passing is a huge loss for the music community, and we offer our condolences to his family, friends, colleagues, and fans."—Recording Academy chief **Neil Portnow** in a statement.

■ "RIP Glen Frey. Great songwriter. Whether you like it or not."—**Marc Maron** on Twitter.

■ "One of the greatest voices, musicians, contributors and collaborators to rock n roll music has passed away. RIP Glenn Frey"—Actor **Miles Teller** on Twitter.

■ "RIP Glenn Frey. It seems like forever that the Eagles music coincided with my entire adult life. Say it ain't so."—Comedian **Richard Lewis** on Twitter.

■ Glenn Frey, founding member of the Eagles, a band I just loved, has died. His songs, those sounds, perfectly captured those days. 70s LA..."—**Bette Midler** on Twitter.

A look at some of Glenn Frey's top songs with the Eagles

LOS ANGELES (AP)—As a founding member of the Eagles, Glenn Frey was responsible for some of the biggest songs of the 1970s. A singer, songwriter and guitarist, he co-wrote most of the tracks on the band's smash 1976 greatest hits album—one of the best-selling albums of all time—with fellow band founder Don Henley, and sang lead vocals on many Eagles hits.

Here's a look at some of the most memorable Eagles songs by Frey, who died Monday in New York:

■ "Take It Easy": With its glittering guitar opening and touch of country twang, "Take It Easy" was the Eagles' first single in 1972 and became one of the band's signature songs. It was mostly written by Jackson Browne, but Frey added a line and sings lead vocals.

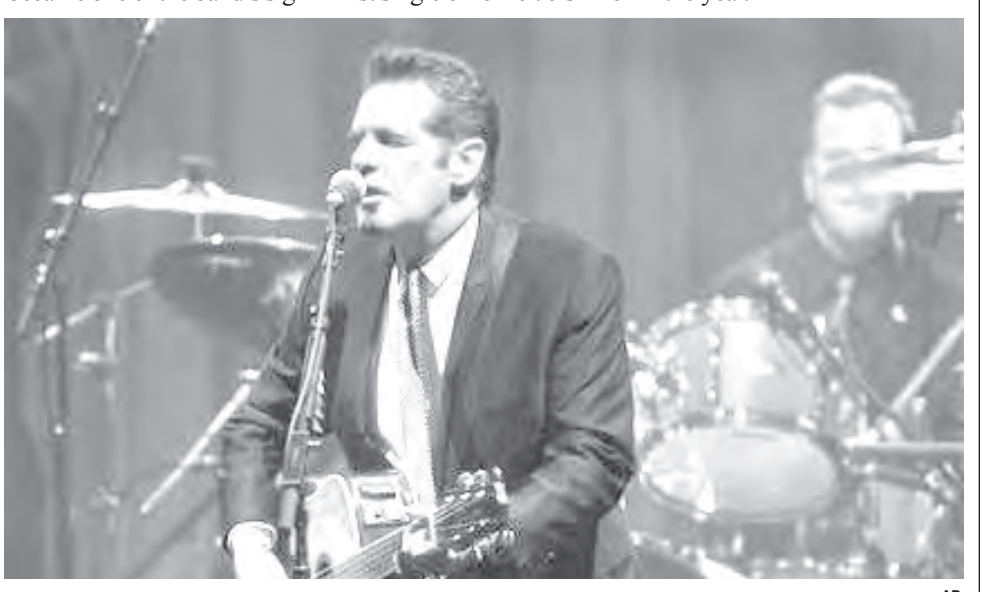
■ "Tequila Sunrise": Co-written with Henley and sang by Frey, this heartbreaking song was the first single off the band's 1973 album, "Desperado." Frey and Henley also co-wrote the album's equally heartbreaking title track.

■ "One of These Nights": Another hit written with Henley, Frey said in 2003 that "One of These Nights" was his favorite Eagles tune, calling it "a breakthrough song." It was the title track of the band's 1975 album and its second single.

- "New Kid in Town:" The first single off of 1976's "Hotel California," ''New Kid in Town" features Frey's lead vocals and Henley's harmonies. They co-wrote the song with frequent collaborator J.D. Souther.

■ "Heartache Tonight": A late '70s-early '80s anthem, "Heartache Tonight" appeared on the 1979 album "The Long Run" and won a Grammy Award for best rock vocal performance by a duo or group. Frey, Henley and Souther wrote the track with Bob Seger. Frey sang lead vocals.

■ "Hotel California": Frey wrote the lyrics to what is probably the best known Eagles song. "Hotel California" won the 1977 Grammy Award winner for record of the year.



AP

In this March 20, 2010 file photo, Glenn Frey of the Eagles performs at Muhammad Ali's Celebrity Fight Night XVI in Phoenix, Arizona.

'Ride Along 2' ends box office reign of 'Force Awakens'

AP

This photo provided by Universal Pictures shows, Kevin Hart, from left, as Ben Barber, Ken Jeong as A.J. and Ice Cube as James Payton in a scene from the film, "Ride Along 2." The movie opens in U.S. theaters on Jan. 15, 2016.

NEW YORK (AP)—Kevin Hart and Ice Cube have ended the monthlong box-office reign of "Star Wars: The Force Awakens."

Their "Ride Along 2" topped the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday weekend in North America with an estimated $41.5 million over four days, according to studio estimates Monday. The Universal release took in $35.3 million Friday through Sunday.

The comedy sequel, which cost $40 million to make, came in below the original, which made $48.6 million over the same holiday weekend two years ago. But the box office-topping performance of "Ride Along 2" nevertheless lent a timely reminder to Hollywood of the power of diversity at the multiplex, days after the Academy Awards came under criticism for a slate of all-white acting nominees.

In second was Alejandro Inarritu's 1820s frontier saga "The Revenant," which earned $39 million over four days, capitalizing on its leading 12 Oscar nominations Thursday. In two weeks of release, the Leonardo DiCaprio-starring film has made nearly $100 million, making it an unexpectedly big success for distributor 20th Century Fox and producer New Regency. The budget for "The Revenant" swelled to $135 million amid production delays.

Michael Bays' "13 Hours: The Secret Soldiers of Benghazi" opened with $19.7 million in four days and $16 million in three days. The "Transformers" director's avowedly nonpolitical film about an extremely political subject performed strongest in the South, where Paramount Pictures said it did 41 percent of its business.

"The Force Awakens" slid to third place with an estimated $32.6 million through Monday. That puts the record domestic total of "The Force Awakens" at $858.5 million, nearly $100 million beyond the previous top domestic total of James Cameron's "Avatar." (Adjusting for inflation, however, neither bests "Gone With the Wind," nor the original 1977 "Star Wars," which remained in and out of the No. 1 spot for more than 40 weeks.)

Overseas, the Disney behemoth crossed $1 billion, buoyed by a second week of release in China. There, the seventh installment of the franchise is doing well ($95.2 million in two weeks), but is not on a recording-setting pace. Globally, "The Force Awakens" sits at $1.86 billion, third all-time behind "Titanic" and "Avatar."

A post-nominations Oscar bump, once a dependable boost for Academy Awards favorites, materialized substantially only for "The Revenant."

The best-picture nominated Irish immigrant tale "Brooklyn" went up 51 percent with $2 million from 687 theaters. The Fox Searchlight release has grossed $25 million. A24's "Room," easily the smallest of the best picture nominees, made $893,357 over the three-day weekend in 293 locations—but that was a 500 percent increase for the mother-son drama, which has grossed $6.2 million.

Estimated ticket sales for Friday through Monday at U.S. and Canadian theaters, according to Rentrak. Where available, the latest international numbers for Friday through Sunday are also included. Final domestic figures will be released Tuesday.

1. **"Ride Along 2,"** $41.5 million.
2. **"The Revenant,"** $39 million.
3. **"Star Wars: The Force Awakens,"** $32.6 million.
4. **"13 Hours: The Secret Soldiers of Benghazi,"** $19.7 million
5. **"Daddy's Home,"** $12 million.
6. **"Norm of the North,"** $9.3 million.
7. **"The Forest,"** $7 million.
8. **"The Big Short,"** $6.5 million.
9. **"Sisters,"** $5.5 million.
10. **"The Hateful Eight,"** $4.4 million.

Estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at international theaters (excluding the U.S. and Canada), according to Rentrak:

1. **"Star Wars: The Force Awakens,"** $47.3 million.
2. **"The Revenant,"** $31.5 million.
3. **"Boonie Bears III,"** $16 million.
4. **"Creed,"** $14.2 million.
5. **"Royal Treasure,"** $11.5 million.
6. **"The Last Witch Hunter,"** $9.3 million.
7. **"The 5th Wave,"** $8.2 million.
8. **"Daddy's Home,"** $7.8 million.
9. **"The Peanuts Movie,"** $7.5 million.
10. **"The Big Short,"** $7 million.

Who's defending Bill Cosby? A look at his criminal team

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—At his only criminal court appearance to date, aging TV icon Bill Cosby stumbled past a scrum of photographers while two lawyers held him up on either side, walking him into a suburban Philadelphia courtroom.

The attorneys hired to defend Cosby in the sex-assault case are a study in contrasts:

■ Outsider Monique Pressley, a lawyer-turned-TV legal analyst with side jobs as a pastor, motivational speaker and radio host, who got a taste of the limelight as a law student, posing a question about race in the O.J. Simpson trial on CNN's Larry King Live.

■ Insider Brian McMonagle, a revered local criminal lawyer whose past clients include mobsters, rappers, athletes and—in a case with some parallels to Cosby's—the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Philadelphia during the searing priest-pedophile scandal.

"He takes a very, very aggressive posture, but does it in a diplomatic and smooth fashion. It's almost like an iron fist in a velvet glove. He is a strong advocate for his client, but can break tension with a quip or a joke," said fellow Philadelphia criminal lawyer William J. Brennan. "Mr. Cosby is lucky to have him."

McMonagle, 57, is expected to lead the defense arguments inside the courtroom when Cosby, 78, returns to court Feb. 2 in a crucial bid to have the case dismissed. He will attack the 12-year delay to file charges, the use of Cosby's deposition from accuser Andrea Constand's civil case, and the government's plan to call other accusers to show a pattern of behavior.

But Pressley will be the lawyer people see on TV in their living rooms.

Pressley, 45, was plucked from relative obscurity to lead the sprawling flock of lawyers Cosby has deployed to fight sex-assault and defamation battles in Pennsylvania, Massachusetts and California, involving some of the dozens of women who accuse him of drugging and molesting them. After stints as both a prosecutor and public defender in Washington, D.C., she was doing TV commentary on the case when she impressed someone in the Cosby camp last fall.

"She's got his confidence," said celebrity defense lawyer Mark Geragos. "Obviously, you can't diminish the fact that you would want a female on the defense team. You're going to have female after female coming up and accusing him. ... And race is always a subtext in the criminal justice system."

Pressley, who is black, could boost Cosby's battered standing in the black community. McMonagle, who is white, may play to jurors in mostly white Montgomery County.

Pressley has taken to the airwaves to blast accusers who come forward decades later to "persecute" someone. And she dismissed an FBI study that found only a tiny fraction of rape accusations are proved false.

AP

In this Wednesday, Dec. 30, 2015 photo Bill Cosby, center, accompanied by his attorneys Brian McMonagle, left, and Monique Pressley, arrives at court to face a felony charge of aggravated indecent assault, in Elkins Park, Pa.

Mott the Hoople drummer Dale Griffin dies at 67

LONDON (AP)—Dale Griffin, a drummer for British glam-rock stalwarts Mott the Hoople, has died at age 67.

He died Sunday, Peter Purnell, of Mott's label Angel Air Records, told the BBC. He had been diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease a decade ago.

A native of Ross-on-Wye, Herefordshire, he was a founding member of the group, which took its name from a British novel of the 1960s and featured singer Ian Hunter and guitarist Mick Ralphs. In 1972, they scored their biggest hit with the David Bowie-penned and -produced raucous anthem "All the Young Dudes." The group's songs also included "All the Way From Memphis" and "Roll Away the Stone."

The band split by the mid-'70s, and Griffin later worked as a producer for BBC live music sessions, with artists including Nirvana, the Smashing Pumpkins and Pulp.

Mott the Hoople reformed in 2009, but Griffin was already ill and appeared only during encores, his place otherwise taken by Martin Chambers, of the Pretenders.

His death comes a week after the death of Bowie, who was 69.

Griffin is survived by his long-term partner, Jean Smith.

Calls for boycott of Oscars grow over diversity of nominees

NEW YORK (AP)—Calls for a boycott of the Academy Awards are growing over the Oscars' second straight year of all-white acting nominees, as Spike Lee and Jada Pinkett Smith each said Monday that they will not attend this year's ceremony.

In a lengthy Instagram post, Lee said he "cannot support" the "lily white" Oscars. Noting that he was writing on Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Lee—who in November was given an honorary Oscar at the Governors Awards—said he was fed up: "Forty white actors in two years and no flava at all," he wrote. "We can't act?!"

In a video message on Facebook, Pinkett Smith also said she wouldn't attend or watch the Oscars in February. Pinkett Smith, whose husband Will Smith wasn't nominated for his performance in the NFL head trauma drama "Concussion," said it was time for people of color to disregard the Academy Awards.

AP

In a Thursday, June 25, 2015 file photo, Jada Pinkett-Smith arrives at the Los Angeles premiere of "Magic Mike XXL" at the TCL Chinese Theatre.

"Begging for acknowledgement, or even asking, diminishes dignity and diminishes power," she said. "And we are a dignified people and we are powerful."

She added: "Let's let the academy do them, with all grace and love. And let's do us differently." The video had amassed 4.5 million by midMonday afternoon.

Last year's all-white acting nominees also drew calls for a boycott, though not from such prominent individuals as Lee and Pinkett Smith. Whether it had any impact or not, the audience for the broadcast, hosted by Neil Patrick Harris, was down 16 percent from the year prior, a six-year low.

This year, Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences President Cheryl Boone Isaacs has made a point of presenting a more inclusive show. The Feb. 28 broadcast will be hosted by Chris Rock and produced by "Django Unchained" producer Reginald Hudlin and David Hill. On Saturday, Rock, unveiling a new promotion for the broadcast, called the ceremony "The White BET Awards."

The academy didn't respond to messages left Monday.

When Oscar nominations were announced Thursday, Isaacs acknowledged she was "disappointed" that all 20 acting nominees were again white. Isaacs has worked to diversify membership for the academy, which a 2012 study by the Los Angeles Times found is overwhelming white and male.

Many awards handicappers expected nominations for Idris Elba of "Beasts of No Nation" and Benicio Del Toro for "Sicario." The N.W.A. biopic "Straight Outta Compton" also failed to earn a best picture nomination, despite some predictions it would. Ryan Coogler's acclaimed Rocky sequel "Creed" scored only a nomination only for Sylvester Stallone. (Lee's own movie, the Chicago gang violence hip-hop musical "Chi-Raq"—celebrated by some and scorned by others—also went unnoticed.)

The hashtag "OscarsSoWhite," created last year, was quickly resurrected online following the nominations. Rev. Al Sharpton—who last year met with former Sony head Amy Pascal following leaked emails that some viewed as racist—on Friday lambasted the academy.

Bowie's 'Blackstar' debuts at No. 1, first US chart-topper

NEW YORK (AP)—David Bowie's last album, "Blackstar," debuted number one on the Billboard charts, the first U.S. chart-topper for the late musician.

Since it was released two days before Bowie died of cancer on Jan. 10, "Blackstar" has sold 174,000 copies, according to Nielsen Music. It's the best sales week for Bowie since Nielsen began electronically tracking music purchases in 1991.

Bowie dislodged the previous No. 1, Adele's "25," which slipped to No. 2 after seven weeks on top.

The 2002 compilation "Best of Bowie" also rocketed up the charts to No. 4 with 94,000 units sold. Altogether, 10 Bowie albums landed on the Billboard 200, which measures sales and streams. The 1972 classic "The Rise and Fall of Ziggy Stardust and the Spiders From Mars" rose to No. 21.

AP

In this Dec. 15, 2003 file photo, singer/songwriter David Bowie launches his United States leg of his worldwide tour called "A Reality Tour," at Madison Square Garden in New York.

'American Pie' singer arrested on domestic violence charge

AMDEN, Maine (AP)—"American Pie" singer Don McLean was arrested on a misdemeanor domestic violence charge Monday in Maine, a jail supervisor said.

McLean was arrested and posted $10,000 bail early Monday at the Knox County Jail, Cpl. Brad Woll said.

The singer-songwriter lives in the town of Camden. A message left for the police chief there by The Associated Press was not immediately returned.

Woll said he did not know if McLean, 70, had a lawyer. Messages seeking comment were left through the singer's website and two representatives. A phone number listed under his name rang unanswered.

In 2013, McLean was fined $400 for driving his Chrysler too fast through a Maine school zone. McLean's attorney argued the school zone warning lights requiring a 15 mph limit were not flashing; police said they were on.

AP

This Monday, Jan. 18, 2016 photo provided by the Knox County Jail shows Don McLean. A jail supervisor said "American Pie" singer McLean bad been arrested on a misdemeanor domestic violence charge in Maine.

The attorney who represented McLean during his traffic case did not immediately return a phone message.

McLean's original manuscript and notes to "American Pie" sold at auction for $1.2 million in April. The 1971 hit was about the deaths of Buddy Holly, Ritchie Valens and the Big Bopper in a plane crash on Feb. 3, 1959—The Day the Music Died.

Wife fears losing her family if she leaves them for lover

DEAR ABBY: I live in Israel, and for the past five years I've been having an affair with a great guy I'll call Yuri. I married very young to a man who is kind and very Orthodox. I love my children and grandchildren.

Yuri thinks we should leave our spouses and make a fresh start. (I'm not Orthodox and neither is he.) I am afraid if I do, I may lose my children and grandchildren. On the other hand, I can't survive without Yuri.

I have always had lovers since I discovered how Orthodox my husband is—it's a survival thing. I am going nuts. What should I do?

IN TURMOIL IN ISRAEL

DEAR IN TURMOIL: Consider VERY carefully what a new life with Yuri will cost you, because it's going to be emotionally expensive. Right now you are part of a community, with standing in that community. If you leave it, all of that will be gone, and you will likely be shunned.

While running away with your lover may seem romantic, I would be very surprised if it didn't spell the end of your relationship with your children and grandchildren. A decision like this should not be taken lightly; it needs to be made rationally. If you are "going nuts," you are NOT thinking rationally, so please, discuss this with a counselor more familiar with Orthodox custom than I.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: My ex sent our children letters from prison. I didn't give them the letters because he was abusive. In one of them he asked our daughter to forgive him and not punish him forever. Abby, her father had abused her, and he's asking for her to stop punishing HIM? She was going to kill herself because of what he did to her.

My daughter went through several years of intense counseling and still battles depression, so there is no way I'll permit him to have contact with her or my other children. I have had no contact with him since we split up several years ago. My lawyer mailed the divorce papers and that was that. Should I write him a letter and tell him what I think?

NOWHERE IN TEXAS

DEAR NOWHERE: No, your lawyer should. One of the hallmarks of abusers is that they tend to blame their victims for their actions. The statement in your ex's letter accusing your daughter of "punishing him" with her silence is troubling. She's under no obligation to forgive her abuser.

When he is finally released from prison, one of the conditions may be that he must have no contact with minors. And if by then your children are no longer minors, one can only hope that they have become mature enough to protect themselves emotionally—and physically, if necessary—from their father.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I'm 13, and a girl in my grade likes me—REALLY likes me, but I think I'm too young. All my friends say I should go for it and have her as a girlfriend, but I'm not sure I should. I need professional help.

NOT QUITE READY IN GEORGIA

DEAR NOT QUITE READY: Determining when a person is "ready" for a romantic relationship isn't something other people can or should decide. If you're not sure you want a girlfriend right now, the fact that she likes you—REALLY likes you—isn't as important as what YOU think and YOU feel. You appear to have a good head on your shoulders. Let it be your guide and don't allow your well-meaning friends to push you into anything.

For an excellent guide to becoming a better conversationalist and a more sociable person, order "How to Be Popular." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $7 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Popularity Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

DEAR ABBY

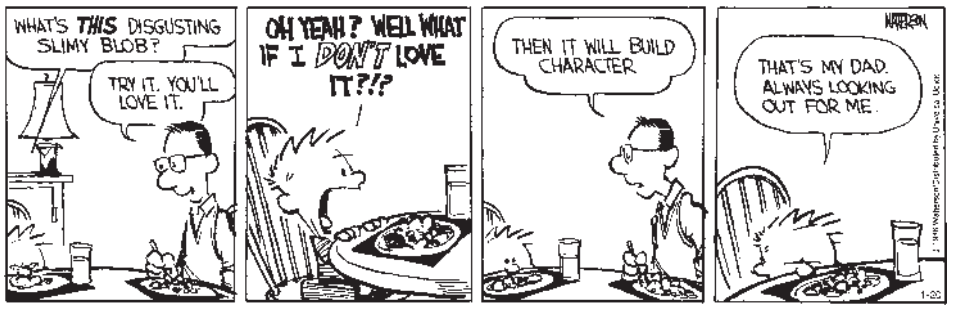
By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Pastimes

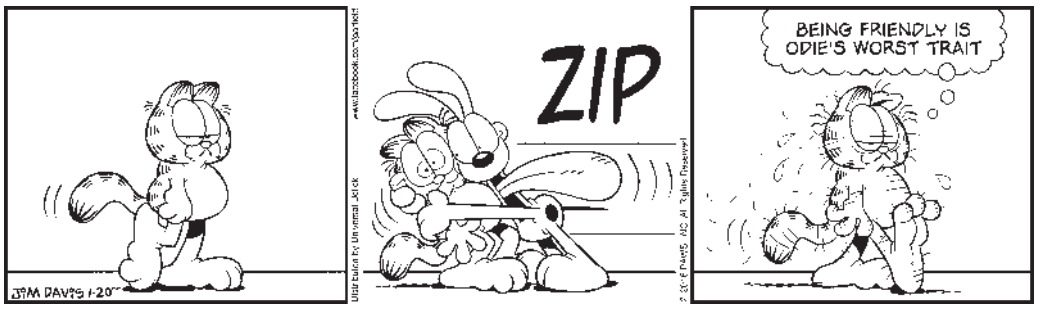
Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


WHAT'S THIS DISGUSTING SLIMY BLOB?
TRY IT. YOU'LL LOVE IT.
OH YEAH? WELL WHAT IF I DON'T LOVE IT?!?
THEN IT WILL BUILD CHARACTER.
THAT'S MY DAD. ALWAYS LOOKING OUT FOR ME.
WATTERSON

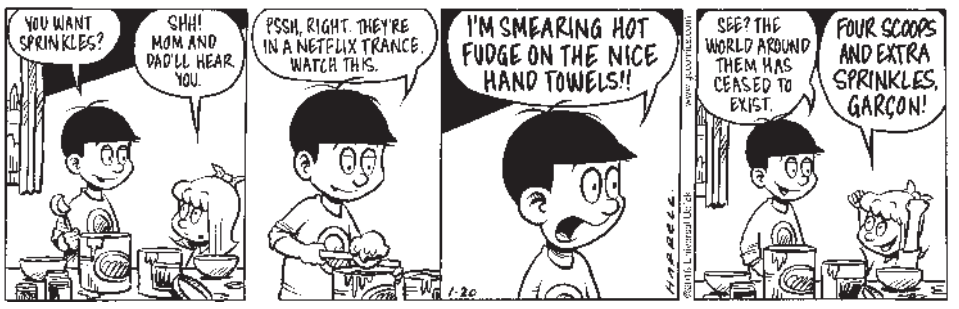
Garfield®

By Jim Davis



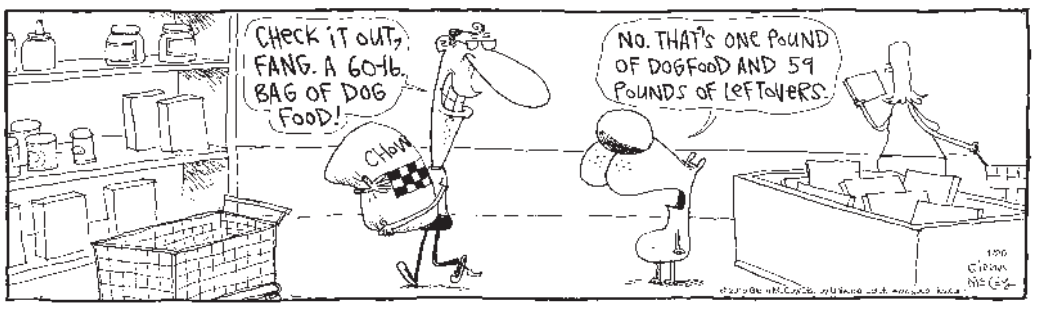
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


YOU WANT SPRINKLES?
SHH! MOM AND DAD'LL HEAR YOU.
PSSH, RIGHT. THEY'RE IN A NETFLIX TRANCE. WATCH THIS.
I'M SMEARING HOT FUDGE ON THE NICE HAND TOWELS!!
SEE? THE WORLD AROUND THEM HAS CEASED TO EXIST.
FOUR SCOOPS AND EXTRA SPRINKLES, GARÇON!

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 Hair detangler
5 Cookie holder
8 Exec's aide
12 "Tosca" solo
13 Gilbert & Sullivan princess
14 Torte
15 "The Catcher in the Rye" author
17 Lena of "Havana"
18 Bracelet site
19 Exit
21 Jittery
24 USN rank
25 Booked solid
28 Lake bird
30 Wide mouth
33 Rap sheet abbr.
34 Bloody Mary liquor
35 Year in Spain
36 Tooth-paste type
37 Pitcher
38 Chew (on)
39 Sock end
41 Zhivago's love
43 Good-year fleet
46 Witchy woman
50 Ancient letter
51 Diner buffet
54 "— to differ!"
55 Gun gp.
56 Millions of years
57 Arizona city
58 Slop spot
59 Tidy

DOWN
1 Jorge's home
2 Algerian port
3 Moo juice
4 Pearl of "Hello, Dolly!"
5 Lively dance
6 Lime drink
7 Scarce
8 — squash
9 Willy Loman, for one
10 Aspen needs
11 Saw-bucks
16 Homer's neighbor
20 Ms. Rowlands
22 Type of worm
23 Alpine call
25 Groceries holder
26 Maui strings
27 Soda crackers
29 Creole veggie
31 Santa — wind
32 Bowl over
34 VIP on Air Force Two
38 Flower plot
40 Alpha's opposite
42 Zenith rival
43 Cup part
44 Garage job
45 Tax form nos.
47 Bas-soon's kin
48 Zola novel
49 Formerly, once
52 Met display
53 Produce eggs

Solution time: 23 mins.

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Yesterday's answer 1-20

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50				■	51	52	53					
54				■	55			■	56			
57				■	58			■	59			

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CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Stacey Dash, 49; Rainn Wilson, 50; Bill Maher, 60; David Lynch, 70.

Happy Birthday: Take money matters seriously and you will avoid a loss. Helping others will prove to be costly and less rewarding than anticipated. Try to focus on the options that will lead to your own prosperity, good health and future prospects. This is a year to build and secure your position, reputation and your life. Your numbers are 4, 11, 23, 25, 33, 37, 45.

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Express what you want through your actions, not your words. You will make the best impression if you are progressive and precise. Someone you love will appreciate a romantic gesture or surprise. A commitment from the heart looks promising. ✪✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): You can make a strategic move that will influence your position, status or reputation. Speak your mind and don't be afraid to use a little pressure to get others on board. You will make a difference if you are bold. ✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): Emotional issues are best resolved quickly. If you sit around ignoring what's going on around you, matters will escalate. Don't follow what other people do if it isn't what's best for you. Love can be deceptive. Try to assess your motives. ✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): You can make a significant lifestyle change that will improve your quality of life, lower your stress and add to your enthusiasm. Get out and do the things you enjoy most with the people who bring you joy. ✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): Initiate change instead of waiting to see what happens. Don't expect to please everyone. Your concern should be that you are true to yourself and your beliefs. Time spent with family and friends will be enlightening. ✪✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Take care of domestic responsibilities before moving on to interesting pastimes with people who stimulate you. An unusual connection will be made if you attend a function that encourages networking. You have a tendency to be indulgent. ✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Plan a trip or make time for a little romance. An update to your image, appearance or to your fitness routine will bring good results. Don't let someone's disgruntled attitude bring you down. Bring about a positive lifestyle change. ✪✪✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): Sign up for an activity or event that will motivate you to try something new and exciting. A unique change to the way you live will spark an original plan that will be conducive to working from home. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): Don't lose sight of your goals. If you need to, pick up additional skills, but don't overload your plate. Take one step at a time, and try to do things right the first time rather than getting in a hurry to complete your work. ✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): Stick to what you know and do the best job possible. Don't be concerned with someone's unpredictable nature. Do your own thing and focus on getting ahead. Keep your personal life a secret to avoid rumors. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): Take care of matters concerning parents or children. Your help will be appreciated and make you feel good as well. Romance is on the rise, and a pick-me-up that you can share with someone you love will bring you closer together. ✪✪✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): A partnership with someone who shares your beliefs or concerns will help you reach your objectives. Look for donations that will make it easier to reach your goal. Don't let an emotional matter stifle your productivity. ✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are generous, creative and helpful. You are open and resourceful.

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SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

			4	3	2			
		1				6		
	8	5				9	2	
5								7
3								5
	6	8	3		7	4	1	
			1		9			
		6				2		
		3	7	4	6	5		

Difficulty Level ★★★ 1/20

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

5	4	2	3	8	9	6	7	1
1	8	3	6	4	7	9	2	5
6	9	7	2	1	5	3	4	8
4	3	1	7	2	8	5	9	6
8	7	9	5	6	1	2	3	4
2	5	6	4	9	3	8	1	7
3	6	4	1	5	2	7	8	9
7	1	8	9	3	6	4	5	2
9	2	5	8	7	4	1	6	3

Difficulty Level ★★ 1/19

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the **WONDERWORD.**

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O	H	P	E	S	O	J	S	A	A	U	T	H	O	R
R	O	O	A	B	I	L	L	A	D	Y	N	S	S	A
Y	S	W	S	L	D	S	E	I	R	E	S	N	C	T
C	T	E	L	W	A	L	L	A	C	E	O	L	A	S
A	N	R	E	R	E	D	N	I	M	I	O	F	R	J
R	I	T	C	T	R	A	E	I	T	N	C	A	Y	A
T	A	R	O	C	K	C	T	C	D	N	H	N	G	C
S	S	I	O	F	N	K	E	O	N	E	A	S	P	Q
I	N	P	K	A	R	N	N	I	M	F	N	B	O	U
L	A	L	M	O	N	A	T	I	F	I	C	O	D	E
E	M	O	Y	O	O	S	N	I	O	L	E	O	C	L
V	R	W	C	J	U	I	T	K	S	M	S	K	A	I
O	E	A	D	A	P	T	A	T	I	O	N	S	S	N
N	L	L	I	R	H	T	R	A	N	S	L	A	T	E

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Adaptations, Austin, Author, Beautiful, Bill, Books, Boss, Chances, Cook, Elsa, Fans, Film, Frank, Host, Jacqueline, Jill, Joan, Joseph, LA Connections, Lady, Lerman, London, Minder, Mini, New York Times, Novelist, Oscar, Podcast, Power Trip, Read, Rock, Romance, Rory, Saint, Series, Star, Thrill, Tiffany, Tracy, Translate, Wallace, Writer

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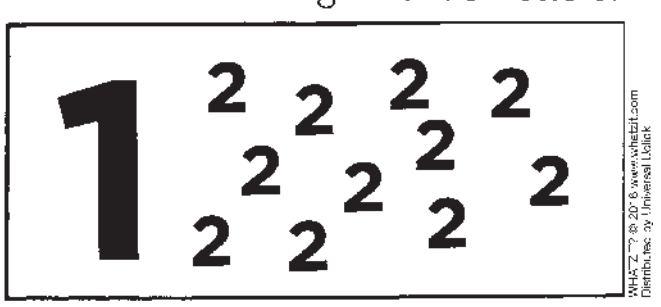

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Curry, Warriors demolish Cavaliers, 132-98

CLEVELAND (AP)— Stephen Curry didn't smell champagne. Blood was in the air.

Curry scored 35 points in three quarters, Andre Iguodala added 20 and Golden State returned to the arena where it won the NBA championship last season and embarrassed the Cleveland Cavaliers 132-98 on Monday night.

The Warriors built a 30-point lead in the first half, pushed their advantage to 43 after halftime and bounced back from a shocking loss in Detroit over the weekend by winning their fifth straight over Cleveland.

Only a late flurry of points helped the Cavs avoid their worst home loss in franchise history.

"They did what they wanted," LeBron James said.

Curry made seven 3-pointers— his last put the Warriors ahead by 40 late in the third quarter— and the reigning league MVP seemed right at home in Quicken Loans Arena, where the Warriors clinched their first title since 1975 last June. On Sunday, Curry said he hoped the visitor's locker room "still smells a little bit like champagne."

That aroma had long dissipated, but the Warriors looked thirsty for more bubbly.

Curry downplayed his champagne boast.

"The last time I was there we had a trophy, we had champagne and we had goggles," Curry said, recalling last season's Game 6. "We had a good time."

With Curry leading the charge, the Warriors overwhelmed the Cavs, who lost at Golden State 89-83 on Christmas Day and could do little to stop the defending champions.

James scored 16 for Cleveland, which just went 5-1 on its longest road trip this season. And like last season's Finals, James didn't have much help. Kyrie Irving had eight points on 3-of-11 shooting and Kevin Love had three points in 21 forgettable minutes.

Golden State Warriors' Stephen Curry (30) shoots over Cleveland Cavaliers' Kyrie Irving (2) and Richard Jefferson (24) in the first half of an NBA basketball game Monday, Jan. 18, 2016, in Cleveland.

Hornets 124, Jazz 119, 2 OT

In Charlotte, Kemba Walker scored a franchise-record 52 points, powering Charlotte to the double-overtime win.

Walker made 16 of 34 shots from the field, including 6 of 11 3-pointers. He was 14 of 15 on free throws.

Walker broke the franchise mark of 48 points set by Glen Rice on March 6, 1997, in an overtime win against Boston.

Marvin Williams added 19 points for the Hornets, and Frank Kaminsky scored 17.

Knicks 119, Sixers 113, 2 OT

In New York, Carmelo Anthony returned from a two-game absence and made a tying 3-pointer with 3.4 seconds left in regulation, and the Knicks beat the 76ers in two overtimes.

Anthony was just 7 for 28 from the field after sitting out two games with a sprained right ankle, but he made the most important shot he took, a 3-pointer from straight away over Nerlens Noel after the Knicks were on the verge of losing a game they led by 18 points in the third quarter.

They finally won it in the second extra period, sparked by two baskets and a blocked shot from reserve guard Langston Galloway.

Raptors 112, Nets 100

In Toronto, Kyle Lowry scored 13 of his 31 points in the fourth quarter, DeMar DeRozan scored 30 points and Toronto matched a season high with its fifth straight win.

Lowry had eight assists and hit three of his seven 3-pointers in the final quarter. The Raptors outscored Brooklyn 31-16 in the fourth.

Brook Lopez led Brooklyn with 29 points and 10 rebounds. The Nets have lost three straight and eight of their last nine.

The game featured eight lead changes and 11 ties. Toronto took a 103-98 lead with 5:48 left behind five straight points from Terrence Ross.

Mavericks 118, Celtics 113, OT

In Dallas, Dirk Nowitzki scored 31 points for Dallas, and Deron Williams had 10 of his 20 points in overtime.

Dallas hit its first four 3-pointers to open overtime. The Mavericks rallied from a six-point fourth-quarter deficit after leading by 17 in the first half, and Nowitzki scored 14 points in the fourth and seven in overtime.

Isaiah Thomas and Marcus Smart led Boston with 20 points apiece. Avery Bradley had 19.

Trail Blazers 108, Wizards 98

In Washington, C.J. McCollum made six 3-pointers and scored 25 points, helping Portland rebound from its worst loss of the season.

Portland was up by 17 points in the first half, but Washington grabbed the lead in the third quarter. The Trail Blazers responded with a 23-1 run.

Meyers Leonard added 18 points for Portland, which lost 114-89 at lowly Philadelphia on Saturday. Damian Lillard scored 16 points, and Mason Plumlee had 10 points, 11 rebounds and seven assists.

Grizzlies 101, Pelicans 99

In Memphis, Marc Gasol had 16 points and 10 rebounds, leading the balanced Grizzlies to the victory.

Matt Barnes, Jeff Green and Courtney Lee also had 16 points apiece for Memphis, which has won three in a row and five of six. Mike Conley added 15 points and 10 assists.

Lee converted a free throw with 3.5 seconds left. He missed the second one, but Gasol tapped the ball into the backcourt, and Barnes let it roll until time expired.

Bulls 111, Pistons 101

In Auburn Hills, Pau Gasol had 31 points and 12 rebounds, and Chicago won again without Joakim Noah.

Noah dislocated his left shoulder Friday and likely will miss the rest of the season, but the Bulls have had success without him. They improved to 9-2 in 2015-16 when he doesn't play.

Ersan Ilyasova had 19 points and 11 rebounds for Detroit, which was outplayed after taking a 13-point lead in the first quarter. The Pistons also lost their cool, getting called for three technical fouls in the third. Detroit guard Kentavious Caldwell-Pope received two of them and was ejected.

Hawks 98, Magic 81

In Atlanta, Al Horford scored 15 points, Paul Millsap had 13 points and 12 rebounds, and the Hawks earned their second straight win.

Atlanta had six players score in double figures and led the entire game. Jeff Teague had 14 points, and Mike Scott scored 12.

Aaron Gordon finished with 18 points and Elfrid Payton scored 16 for the Magic. Orlando was held to 34.5 percent shooting from the field, lowest this season for an Atlanta opponent.

The Magic have lost seven of eight.

James, Anthony top 30 finalists for Olympic basketball squad

NEW YORK (AP)—LeBron James and Carmelo Anthony are a step closer to a fourth Olympics, and Stephen Curry is in position for his first.

The NBA stars were among 30 players selected Monday as finalists for the U.S. basketball team that will attempt to win a third straight gold medal.

The final 12-player roster for Rio de Janeiro will be chosen this summer. If James and Anthony are on it they would become the first American men to play in four Olympics.

The other candidates for Rio are: Kevin Durant and Russell Westbrook (Oklahoma City); Chris Paul, Blake Griffin and DeAndre Jordan (Clippers); Kawhi Leonard and LaMarcus Aldridge (San Antonio); Klay Thompson, Draymond Green, Andre Iguodala and Harrison Barnes (Golden State); Kyrie Irving and Kevin Love (Cleveland); Dwight Howard and James Harden (Houston); Anthony Davis (New Orleans); Paul George (Indiana); DeMarcus Cousins and Rudy Gay (Sacramento); John Wall and Bradley Beal (Washington); Jimmy Butler (Chicago); Mike Conley (Memphis); DeMar DeRozan (Toronto); Andre Drummond (Detroit); Kenneth Faried (Denver) and Gordon Hayward (Utah).

"The depth of talent that exists in the national team program is extraordinary. Repeating as gold medalists at the 2016 Olympics will not be easy, but we feel confident that we have 30 finalists who offer amazing basketball abilities and special versatility," USA Basketball chairman Jerry Colangelo said in a statement.

Kobe Bryant, who is retiring after this season, took himself out of the running for a third Olympics this weekend.

James and Anthony have already joined Hall of Famer David Robinson as the only U.S. men to play in three Olympics, winning bronze in 2004 before leading the U.S. to gold in Beijing and London. Paul could join that list this summer.

James has said he would base his decision about playing on his health and his family's wishes, and may not decide until after his NBA season ends.

"I haven't thought about it," he said at Cleveland's shootaround before its game against Golden State on Monday.

"The last time I thought about Team USA was Kobe taking his name out of the pool. That's the last thing I kind of really thought about, so I'm not any inch closer to playing or not any inch closer to not playing. I haven't really thought about it much."

After playing in five straight NBA Finals, another lengthy season could impact his interest in wearing the red, white and blue again.

"The season has always kind of dictated it," James said.

Curry called it a huge honor to be selected.

"That would be a great experience," Curry said following Golden State's 132-98 victory at Cleveland. "Obviously, there's 30 capable, highly talented experienced guys on that list. There should some tough decisions for Mr. Colangelo and Coach K. Picking from that crop of 30 guys you've got some great choices there. Hopefully things work out this summer and I'll be able to try to go for a gold medal in Brazil."

Colangelo has said the Americans could send their strongest team yet to the Olympics, and it certainly could be their most experienced one. The pool of finalists includes 18 players who have won Olympic or world championships, and seven players who have played at least 30 international games—ed by Anthony's 72.

Like James, Anthony isn't ready yet to commit to playing again.

"This summer's a long way away for me to be thinking about that right now," he said after returning from a two-game absence due to a sprained right ankle and playing 49 minutes in the Knicks' double-overtime victory over Philadelphia.

Ten players have suited up for the Americans in the Olympics, but Curry isn't among them. He wasn't chosen for the team in 2012, shortly before the NBA's MVP broke out as one of the game's biggest superstars.

Venus loses, Murray advances at Australian Open

AP
Andy Murray of Britain makes a backhand return to Alexander Zverev of Germany during their first round match at the Australian Open tennis championships in Melbourne, Australia, Tuesday, Jan. 19, 2016.

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP)—Venus Williams tried to rally, winning two games and getting another break-point chance after falling a set and 5-0 behind, before her 16th trip to the Australian Open finished in a first-round loss to Johanna Konta.

The 35-year-old, seven-time major winner trudged off Rod Laver Arena, waving to the crowd at 1:55 p.m. on the second day of the tournament following a surprising 6-4, 6-2 loss to the No. 47-ranked Konta, a Sydney-born British player who was making her debut in the main draw at the Australian Open after losing twice previously in qualifying.

Andy Murray opened with a 6-1, 6-2, 6-3 win over Alexander Zverev, sand remains very much a round-by-round proposition at Melbourne Park, where he has lost the final four times. He had Amelie Mauresmo, a new mother, back in his coaching corner for the match and was happy not to get any mid-match news from home. He has said he'll leave immediately, regardless of the stage of the tournament, if his wife, Kim, goes into labor in London with their first child.

"I'm more excited than nervous now," Murray said of the pending arrival. "I don't have any news because I've just come off the court. I'm hoping my phone hasn't been buzzing in my bag. But Kim will message my team if anything's going on during the matches, and I'll see what happens."

Williams had a career comeback last season, winning three titles, finding some consistency after a long struggle with illness and finishing the year in the top 10 for the first time since 2010. She reached the quarterfinals at the Australian and U.S. Opens —the first and last majors of the year.

In 2016, she's 0-2 after also losing in a warmup tournament at Auckland, New Zealand.

It was the eighth time she's lost in the first round of a Grand Slam tournament and the third in Australia, where she reached the quarterfinals in her first appearance in 1998 and lost the final to her youngest sister, Serena, in 2003.

Konta was really going for her groundstrokes in a high-risk, high-reward approach that kept Williams, who had wrapping on her left leg, on the defensive.

"When the draw came out and I saw who I was playing I was like 'Well, ok, I just hope to stay out there more than an hour,'" Konta said in a post-match TV interview, apparently as surprised as anyone after her straight sets win over the No. 8-seeded Williams.

No. 3 Garbine Muguruza needed exactly an hour to beat Estonian qualifier Anett Kontaveit 6-0, 6-4, No. 11 Timea Bacsinszky advanced over Katerina Siniakova 6-3, 7-5 and No. 15 Madison Keys, a semifinalist here last year, had to save set points in the first before beating Zarina Diyas 7-6 (5), 6-1.

No. 18 Elina Svitolina, No. 19 Jelena Jankovic and No. 21 Ekaterina Makarova, who beat Venus Williams in the first round here in 2014, also advanced.

On the men's side, No. 13 Milos Raonic followed up his win over Roger Federer in the final of the Brisbane International tune-up event with a 6-1, 6-4, 6-4 win over Lucas Pouille, No. 18 Feliciano Lopez beat Daniel Evans 6-1, 6-0, 6-4 and No. 32 Joao Sousa beat Mikhail Kukushkin 6-3, 6-4, 6-3.

No. 5 Rafael Nadal was playing fellow Spaniard Fernando Verdasco in a rematch of the epic semifinal here in 2009.

SIDEBAR Federer: It's time to name players suspected of match fixing

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP)—Roger Federer has heard enough speculation about match-fixing in tennis. If players are suspected of corruption, he wants names.

Federer was responding to reports by BBC and BuzzFeed News published Monday that tennis authorities have suppressed evidence of match-fixing and overlooked suspected cases involving players ranked in the top 50, including Grand Slam singles and doubles winners.

The reports said that none of these players had faced sanctions and more than half would be playing at this year's Australian Open, which started Monday. The players weren't identified by name.

"I would love to hear names," Federer said after beating Nikoloz Basilashvili of Georgia 6-2, 6-1, 6-2. "Then at least it's concrete stuff and you can actually debate about it. Was it the player? Was it the support team? Who was it? Was it before? Was it a doubles player, a singles player? Which Slam?"

"It's super serious and it's super important to maintain the integrity of our sport," Federer added. "So how high up does it go? The higher it goes, the more surprised I would be."

ATP chairman Chris Kermode appeared at a news conference to reject the assertion that match-fixing had gone unchecked in the sport, saying the Tennis Integrity Unit remained ''constantly vigilant and not complacent" when it comes to tackling corruption.

"The Tennis Integrity Unit and tennis authorities absolutely reject any suggestion that evidence of match-fixing has been suppressed for any reason or isn't being thoroughly investigated,"he said.

The BBC and BuzzFeed allegations were based on files they reported had been leaked "from inside the sport" showing evidence of suspected match-fixing orchestrated by gambling syndicates in Russia and Italy that had been uncovered during an ATP investigation of a 2007 match in Sopot, Poland, involving suspiciously high levels of betting.

According to the reports, the ATP investigation widened to uncover a network of other players suspected of match-fixing, but officials didn't follow up on the cases. Since then, the reports said, the ATP has repeatedly been warned by bookmakers, foreign police and other investigators about many of the same players, but hasn't taken any action against them.

Kermode said the integrity unit had been formed in 2008 as a joint initiative of the International Tennis Federation, the ATP, the WTA and the Grand Slam Board to combat corruption in the wake of the Sopot investigation.

He maintained that the unit investigates every report it receives and takes action only when it has enough evidence to do so. It has since sanctioned 18 people for match fixing, including five players and one official who received lifetime bans.

Brady: I never imagined playing in 10 AFC title games

NEW ENGLAND (AP)—As a 24-year-old in 2001, his second NFL season, Tom Brady stepped in when Drew Bledsoe was injured and led the New England Patriots into the playoffs.

When he arrived in Pittsburgh to play the Steelers in the AFC championship game, Brady couldn't believe he was there.

"Fifteen years later, to be a part of 10 of those, I never imagined that any of this was even possible," Brady said on Monday. "You never take it for granted."

A sixth-round draft pick who spent his rookie year as the No. 4 quarterback on the Patriots' depth chart, Brady has grown into a four-time NFL champion and a three-time Super Bowl MVP.

On Sunday, he will play in the AFC championship game for the fifth time in a row and the 10th time in his career, extending what was already an NFL record.

"It's beyond what I'd ever imagined in my wildest dreams," Brady said on his weekly radio appearance on WEEI.

Hall of Famer Joe Montana, whom Brady grew up in the Bay Area idolizing, played in seven conference title games, six with the San Francisco 49ers and another with the Kansas City Chiefs. He was 4-3; Brady is 6-3 heading into Sunday's game in Denver against the Broncos and longtime nemesis Peyton Manning.

Patriots offensive coordinator Josh McDaniels said what's most remarkable about Brady is his consistency. After playing in six Super Bowls in his career -- and another 24 playoff games leading up to them -- Brady isn't likely to be overwhelmed by the moment.

"It's a big football game, and he's played in a lot of them," McDaniels said. "Doing the things that you've done to get yourself in this position are really important. ... His preparation, his rest and treatment and getting his body ready and his mind right. He does a lot of the things every day to prepare for the next day.

"Even though these games have finality to them that some games in the regular season or preseason don't have, he approaches it the same way."

Brady is 22-8 in the playoffs, winner of his first 10 postseason games and his past four. His first career playoff loss and his most recent one were both in Denver, where he is 2-6 in his career.

The Broncos beat New England 30-24 in overtime on Nov. 29 -- a victory that earned Denver home-field advantage for Sunday's game. Manning was out for that one, replaced by Brock Osweiler, but he'll be back on Sunday to face Brady in what could be his last game against Brady.

Although the two maintain a golf-and-dinner friendship in the offseason, Brady said he wasn't sure if he would be in touch with Manning this week with such an important game looming.

"It will be fun to play another Peyton Manning-led team," said Brady, who had a long run of success against Manning when he was with the Indianapolis Colts.

"It's pretty hard to get to this point. There's only four teams standing," Brady said. "Two of these teams have to go home. Hope we're not one of them."

Tigers reach $132.75M, 6-year deal with Upton

DETROIT (AP) — The Detroit Tigers have agreed to a $132.75 million, six-year contract with free-agent outfielder Justin Upton, according to a person with knowledge of the deal.

The person spoke Monday night on condition of anonymity because the agreement had not been announced. The deal was pending a physical, and Upton can opt out after two seasons.

The 28-year-old Upton gives the Tigers another powerful bat in the middle of the lineup and fills a need in left field after Detroit traded slugger Yoenis Cespedes at the deadline last year. Upton hit .251 with 26 home runs and 81 RBIs for the San Diego Padres last season.

It was another big move for the Tigers, who are coming off a last-place finish in 2015 but signed right-hander Jordan Zimmermann earlier this offseason. Detroit also traded for closer Francisco Rodriguez, but it was unclear how high the Tigers would be willing to increase a payroll that also includes big commitments to Miguel Cabrera, Justin Verlander, Victor Martinez, Anibal Sanchez and Ian Kinsler.

AP

In this Sept. 15, 2015, file photo, San Diego Padres left fielder Justin Upton looks to hit in the sixth inning of a baseball game against the Arizona Diamondbacks in Phoenix. The Detroit Tigers have agreed to a six-year contract with free-agent outfielder Upton, according to a person with knowledge of the deal.

The expensive agreement with Upton could put Detroit in a position to challenge World Series champion Kansas City, which dominated the AL Central last year after the Tigers had won the division the previous four seasons.

Detroit traded Cespedes and David Price at the deadline, and then let general manager Dave Dombrowski go. Al Avila was promoted to Dombrowski's spot, and he has been aggressive in his first offseason in charge.

Upton has played his entire nine-year career so far in the National League. He was traded from Arizona to Atlanta before the 2013 season, and the Padres acquired him from the Braves before last season. Upton has surpassed 25 homers in five of the last seven seasons.

Detroit is now set to enter next season with plenty of power at the corner outfield spots - right fielder J.D. Martinez hit 38 homers last year. If Cabrera can stay healthy after missing 43 games in 2015, the Tigers could have a formidable offense.

Voyagers pull away in Tuesday billiards

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Jokers Destroyers, seen here posing for a group photo, are hoping to catch up with sister team Voyagers with eight weeks left in the Budweiser-Saipan Billiards Association Open 8-Ball Tuesday League.

The Jokers IT&E Voyagers have slowly pulled away in the Budweiser-Saipan Billiards Association Open 8-Ball Tuesday League.

The Voyagers moved to 93-50 after results of Week 11 games played last week in various bars on island came in.

They now enjoy a 20-win lead over sister team Destroyers, which have a 73-70 mark with the Docomo Hustlers, another Jokers-backed squad, not far behind at third place with their 69-74 slate.

The Jonny's Titans and the Jokers StraightBlackBall are still in good position for a podium finish with their similar 68-75 records. The Jonny's Crazy 8 is at the cellar with a 58-85 card.

The Hustlers were the Voyagers' recent victims as the league leaders coasted to an 11-2 win in their last week's matchup.

The triumvirate of Voyagers captain Rolly Villanueva, Mark Butac, and Brian Nelvis proved to be too much against the Hustlers, who showed up minus Jerry Soriano.

Only the father-and-son tandem of Senen and Albert Pangilinan were able to squeeze out victories against the Voyagers, scoring both of their wins against Butac in the singles 8-Ball.

Hustlers captain Rowel Mariano, Erwin Gomez, Robert Sanciangco, Simeon Kapileo, and Joey Lucido were unlucky with their respective matches.

In other Tuesday League results, the Destroyers completed a 9-4 triumph over the Crazy 8, while the Titans escaped with a 7-6 decision against the StraightBlackBall.

Week 12 matches were still being played at press time with the Destroyers taking on the StraightBlackBall, the Titans facing the Voyagers, and the Hustlers clashing with the Crazy 8.

In the Thursday League results last Jan. 14, the Jokers Homeboyz jumped on top of the standings following their 11-2 crushing of the Wild Bill's Rack 'N' Roll.

The Homeboyz have improved to 65-39, while National Alamo Car Rental, the leader in the past weeks, dropped to second with its 63-41 following an 8-5 result over Jonny's Team SCS. The Jokers WildBoyz also scored an 8-5 win against the Wild Bill's Wild Wild West.

The WildBoyz are still in third with a 57-47 mark, followed by the 46-58 of the Wild Wild West. The Rack 'N' Roll has a 42-62 record, while Team SCS holds a 39-65 slate to complete the standings.

Week nine action continues tomorrow with the Wild Wild West hosting Team SCS. In other games, the WildBoyz will try to protect its territory when its meets the visiting Rack 'N' Roll and the Homeboyz and Alamo clash in a much-awaited battle of the leaders.

SUN

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City (3-1) routed Chow Time, 41-11, last Saturday.

Kyla Ito and Mikky Kautz scored 10 points apiece, while Madi Alegre added 9 in handing Chow Time its fourth loss.

Lob City set up the rout after taking an 18-5 lead at the end of the first half.

In the other women's division match last Saturday, Sun Palace leaned on Diane Pablo's 21 points to beat Kagman (1-3).

Pablo dropped 16 of her total points in the second half to foil Kagman's comeback bid. The Marianas High School standout scored 8 straight markers at one point in the second frame to keep Sun Palace in control of the match.

In Sun Palace's other victory last week, it was Irish Pagarao who starred in the victory. The lefty guard fired a game-high 28 points to power Sun Palace to an 8-point win.

Pagarao registered 20 markers in the first half, which ended with Sun Palace holding on to a 30-27 advantage. Pagarao then got some help from her teammates in the second half to gain more cushion en route to Sun Palace's third victory.

SATURDAY
First Game

Lob City 41—Ito 10, M. Kautz 10, Alegre 9, Lizama 6, Castillo 4, R. Kautz 2.

Chow Time 11— C. Avelino 5, Olivos 2, D. Avelino 2, Deducin 2.

Scoring by halves: 18-5, 41-11.

Second Game

Sun Palace 46— Pablo 21, Pagarao 9, Phan 4, Ito 3, Santiago 2.

Kagman 38—Takami 14, R. Jones 12, J. Jones 6, Agulto 6.

Scoring by halves: 26-14, 46-38.

THURSDAY

Sun Palace 56— Pagarao 28, Palero 12, Alipio 8, Race 5, Ito 2.

Panty Droppers 44—Francisco 19, Rogoyawa 12, Garon 6, Pena 4, Demola 3.

Scoring by halves: 30-27, 56-44.

TAN

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lessly watching on the bench, Duenas and company kept attacking Joeten's wobbly inside defense to pad Tan Holdings' lead to 23 at the break, 48-25. Duenas added 7 more points and drew a lot of help from his teammates to send Joeten to a much deeper hole.

Tan Holdings then protected the 20-plus spread in the third quarter with team captain Elmer Esdrelon taking over the scoring chores from Duenas. The veteran guard registered 14 markers in the third canto to keep Tan Holdings' safe distance, entering the final frame.

In the fourth canto, Tan Holdings went on to establish its biggest lead in the game, 76-48, with Jarett Matsutaro scoring 4 straight points off a putback from Adonis Macoto's miss and a give-and-go play with Dindo Pablo.

With the game slowing getting away from its hands, Joeten tried to mount a comeback in the remaining eight minutes of the match, but it simply did not have enough offensive firepower and defensive stops to do so. Joeten could only manage to move within 14, 65-79, just 1:39 left on the clock.

Joeten had a chance to bring the deficit down to 12 with Alex Lauron on the foul line, but he muffed both charities and then gave up a foul in the rebound play before voluntarily checking back to their bench to cap the team's frustrating night.

Duenas and Esdrelon fired 23 points apiece in Tan Holdings' rout of Joeten, while R.J. Nonato chipped in 13. Dixon Kwon led Joeten with his 20 markers, but missed several shots in the final canto, while Lauron and Sid Quan contributed 12 and 11, respectively.

Game 2 of the title series will be played at 8pm after the 6:30pm consolation match between McDonald's and Commonwealth Utilities Corp.

Tan Holdings 84—Esdrelon 23, Duenas 23, Nonato 13, Rivera 8, Matsutaro 6, Palacios 5, Kim 3, Pablo 2, Macoto 1.

Joeten 68—Kwon 20, Lauron 12, Quan 11, Taisague 6, Tobias 6, Rasa 4, Jacob 3, Sambile 2, Villegas 2.

Scoring by quarters: 26-10, 48-25, 72-48, 84-68.

TSUNAMI

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medal.

"If she will be able to cut 35 seconds (in 50m butterfly), it will be a dream come true," Kimura said.

Dangol timed in at 37.86 second to place sixth in last year's finals.

Other Tokyo Junior Sprint returnees—Tenorio, Camacho-Deleon Guerrero, and Nanaka—aim for a better performance this year.

The 11-year-old Tenorio will be participating in the 100m IM and 50m backstroke. He was ranked at No. 28 in last year's 100m IM (1:29.88) and No. 32 in the 50m backstroke (40 seconds). Tenorio's target times this year are 1:25:00 in the 100m IM and 37 seconds in the 50m backstroke.

Camacho-Deleon Guerrero will try to barge into the finals of the 50m freestyle and shoot for 31 seconds in that event. He clocked in at 32.97 seconds in the Guam tournament last year. The 10-year-old swimmer's other event is the 50m butterfly.

For Nanaka, her goal is to make it to the finals of the 50m breaststroke and time in at 41 seconds. She will also join the 100m individual medley race in the girls 9 to 10 age group.

Meanwhile, Batallones, Aika, and Aleksenko will debut in the Tokyo Junior Sprint and are hoping to have a notable showing in their first appearance in the annual tournament that features over 3,000 youth swimmers from around the world.

Batallones is competing in the 50m freestyle and 50m butterfly and aims to set 30 seconds in his first event and 34 seconds in the other race.

Aika, who Kimura believes is ready for the challenge in Tokyo after wining high-point awards in the Guam Championships for two years, will swim in the 100m IM and 50m backstroke. In the 100m IM, Aika is gunning for 1:25.00, while her target time in the 50m backstroke is 37 seconds.

Aleksenko, who gained a slot on the Tokyo-bound team for his impressive performance in Guam in the past three tournaments, will race in the 50m freestyle and 50m butterfly. He hopes to enter the finals in the 50m freestyle and clock in under 33 seconds. He swam in the 50m freestyle event in a local meet early this month and timed in at 33.99 seconds.

Saipan Golfers Association 2015 Ace of Aces Tournament

PHOTOS By JON PEREZ

The Saipan Golfers Association monthly winners of 2015 pose with their trophies during the group's awards banquet last Sunday in Capital Hill

John "Nanni" Cruz surveys the wind conditions and course layout before teeing off.

Rep. Larry I. Deleon Guerrero reacts after teeing off.

Gregorio Sablan Jr. watches the direction of his tee shot.

Juan L. Babauta watches his tee shot.

Steve Balakrishna tees off.

SGA Aces of Aces champion Gregorio Sablan Jr., fourth left, joins, from left, finalists Nick Sablan, Jung Eun Teack, John "Nanni" Cruz, and Attorney General Ed Manibusan for a group photo.

Frances Sablan prepares to tee off at the first hole of the Marianas Country Club.

SGA member Das Krishnan swings.

SGA members, clockwise from left, Joe Demapan, Juan Lizama, Das Krishnan, Frank Castro, and Jess Castro wait for their turn to tee off.

Curry, Warriors demolish Cavaliers

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Sports

Venus loses, Murray advances at Australian Open

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Tan Holdings inches closer to title

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The championship is within Tan Holdings' reach following its 84-68 demolition of Joeten in Game 1 of their finals series in the 2nd JP World Corp. Customer Appreciation Basketball League last Monday night at the Gillette Multipurpose Gymnasium.

Tan Holdings could close out the short best-of-three championship showdown tonight if it wins in Game 2, while Joeten will aim to extend the series and bounce back from a big letdown in the opener.

What was expected as a close match between the two teams that had similar 7-1 records in the elimination round ended in a blowout with Tan Holdings dominating Joeten from the opening tip up to the final buzzer.

Matt Duenas kicked things off for the top-ranked Tan Holdings, dropping 10 markers in the first period to lift his team to a promising 26-10 advantage. The burly Duenas had an easier time barreling his way into the paint, as Joeten missed the services of one of its frontliners—Steve Rasa.

The energetic Joeten forward suffered from sprain after stepping on somebody's foot in the rebound play midway in the first period. He left the match with 4 points to his credit and only he and Alex Lauron scored more than one field goal for Joeten in the opening canto.

With Rasa out and help-

See TAN on Page 26

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Tan Holdings' Matt Duenas beats Joeten's Sid Quan, second left, and Ferdie Tobias in this rebound play in the fourth quarter of Game 1 of their title series in the JP World caging last Monday night at the Gillette Multipurpose Gymnasium.

Sun Palace still perfect; Lob City wins

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
A Lob City player, left, runs into a Chow Time defender on her way to the basket during the second half of their game in the Tan Holdings holiday caging last Saturday at the Gillete Multipurpose Gymnasium.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Sun Palace gained two more wins to remain unbeaten in the women's division of the 2015 Tan Holdings Christmas Basketball Tournament, while Lob City also prevailed in last week's games at the Gillette Multipurpose Gymnasium.

Sun Palace first topped Panty Droppers last Thursday, 56-44, and then downed Kagman Poksu, 47-38, last Saturday to improve to a 4-0 record and keep the solo lead in the six-team field. Sun Palace will go for a sweep tomorrow and is likely to retain its immaculate mark as it faces cellar dweller Chow Time (0-4) in the last elimination round match. Lob

See SUN on Page 26

7 Tsunami Saipan swimmers to join Tokyo Junior Sprint

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Tsunami Saipan is sending seven swimmers to the Tokyo Junior Sprint 2016 this March at the Tatsumi International Swimming Arena in Japan.

Head coach Hiro Kimura said the club will be represented in the March 5 and 6 tournament by Nelson Batallones, Aika and Nanaka Watanabe, Juhn Tenorio, Anthony Camacho-Deleon Guerrero, Isaiah Aleksenko and Ashley Dangol.

"This year, Tsunami Saipan will turn to a young team. The oldest members of the team (Aika and Batallones) are 12 years old," said Kimura, who in the past tournaments fielded swimmers from the U15 and over age group.

Dangol, one of the youngest member of the squad at 9 (the other one is Aleksenko), is returning to the Tokyo Junior Sprint after making it to the finals of the 50m butterfly. She will still race in the 50m butterfly, while her second event is the 100m individual medley. Dangol hopes to make the finals again and win the gold

See TSUNAMI on Page 26

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Isaiah Aleksenko is one of the Tsunami Saipan swimmers who will debut in the Tokyo Junior Sprint 2016 this March.